

POSITIVE IMPACT: ALIGNING CHURCH LEADERSHIP
TO SUPPORT CHURCH MISSION AND VISION
FOR SUSTAINABLE MINISTRY

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
DEDICATION	viii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER	
1. MINISTRY FOCUS	4
Conclusion	
2. BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS.....	20
Old Testament	
New Testament	
Summary	
3. HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS	47
The Enlightenment Period	
Postmodern Period Leadership	
Summary	
4. THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS	70
Theology of Work	
Liberation Theology	
Black Theology/Black Liberation Theology	
Womanist Theology and Liberation	

5.	THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS.....	91
	Theoretical Foundations from Another Discipline	
6.	PROJECT ANALYSIS.....	112
	Methodology	
	Implementation	
	Summary of Learning – Results of Implementation	
	Conclusion	
APPENDIX		
A.	LEADERSHIP TEAM INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	143
B.	AGENDA FOR SERVANT LEADER SUMMIT: PART ONE	147
C.	PRE-TEST/POST-TEST QUESTIONS: GENERAL KNOWLEDGE OF CHURCH.....	149
D.	AGENDA FOR SERVANT LEADER SUMMIT: PART TWO	151
BIBLIOGRAPHY		153

ABSTRACT

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by
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The context of this project will be The Light Community Church in Richmond, Virginia. A lack of leadership alignment can impede the implementation of the church mission and vision. If church leaders are properly selected, vetted and trained on core values that align with the church vision and mission, the church can be sustained and make a positive impact within the church and community. The proposed methodology is qualitative mixed methods using interviews, pre-tests, post-tests, and teaching with surveys. The expected outcome is leaders become more equipped to carry out the mission and vision using a team approach.

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The researcher acknowledges her peer associate and fellow cohort members for their friendship and support during this process. Acknowledgment also goes out to the professional associates, Rev. Dr. Dexter Cannon for introducing me to United Theological Seminary in a personal way, and for sharing his work on leadership with me. The conference that Dr. Cannon hosted called Kingdom Church Planters was also encouraging and informative. The workshop about building passionate leaders connected to my work. Rev. Dr. LaKeisha Cook is acknowledged for her friendship, encouragement and preached word that was delivered at our church during the doctoral process. Rev. Dr. LaKendra Hardware often made herself available to me during my required intensives to Dayton, Ohio and shared her expertise on leadership retreats and experience on team building for optimal results.

The researcher is indebted to The Light Community Church in Richmond, Virginia for their willingness to explore this project, and support as I endeavored to be better equipped to serve them and the community at large. There were dozens of servant leaders from our diverse ministry teams who eagerly supported the project by attending the workshops, teachings and servant leader's summits. The researcher appreciates the time, talent, completion of surveys, words of encouragement and authentic participation from our leaders. The members of the congregation have also been encouraging, accommodating, and flexible as I juggled this additional responsibility. Gratitude is extended to the researcher's mentors, Rev. Dr. Angela D. Washington and Rev. Dr. Donnell J. Moore for their wisdom, guidance, teaching, and constant encouragement

during the doctoral journey. Rev. Dr. Lance Watson is also acknowledged as my pastor and a constant inspiration for what can happen for people who constantly seek and trust God.

The researcher acknowledges her husband Kevin Ridley and their two children who have been wonderful throughout this process. They have not only been willing to share me with our congregation but have been unwavering with support of this work. Kevin Ridley has been and continues to support any work that I do for the kingdom and kept things running smoothly when I was away for school. Laughing with all of you even in the stressful times has made this journey easier. To the children, I pray that you will always go after your dreams and take on challenges with the same grace that you have extended to me.

Finally, the researcher acknowledges that she would not be here if it had not been for the grace of God and the union of William and Harriett Anderson, her parents. The support and encouragement that have been given by them and her sister, Katrina Kersey is priceless. Extreme gratitude is bestowed to you and my entire family for helping me to be who I am today. Your encouragement and pride in my pursuits helps to push me further.

DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to the researcher's grandmother, Marie Anderson, who has gone on to be with the Lord. The matriarch of our family will always be remembered for her laughter, tenacity, and phenomenal leadership in spite of life challenges and limited resources. Just as your home was a gathering place for healing and a space where all are welcomed, this work is designed to allow that same foundation for church leadership, congregation and community at large.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership development is important in church ministry. In the corporate sector it is expected that there will be a trajectory and tract that employees can follow in order to move up the corporate ladder. In church, the expectations for leadership development can be low since many people in church consider their service to be “volunteer.” With this in mind, pastors can be so grateful to have help that they neglect requiring much of servant leaders. They can be so excited about church growth that they fail to determine what is needed to provide sustainable ministry that would move beyond them. This can result in clergy burnout, ineffective leadership, and can stunt church growth and community impact.

Chapter one is the ministry focus, which provides synergistic insight to the context and the ministry journey. The researcher is the founder of The Light Community Church and wanted to explore the concept of leadership alignment that centered on the church mission and vision for sustainable ministry. With so much diversity in spiritual maturity, church experience and gift sets, it is imperative to have some foundational baseline by which all servant leaders can support a greater goal for the greater good. If there is a mismatch in leadership alignment than the congregation is cheated because they are not getting the level of support that they need consistently, and the community is cheated because the church will not be able to successfully meet their needs. Alternatively, if an investment is made in leadership training that focuses on the mission

and vision of the church, then the church will be able to provide sustainable ministry. The researcher came into the project knowing that there had not been enough leadership training done within the context.

Chapter two was the biblical research that focused on Elijah and Elisha's relational equity and the work they were able to do in the community. Particular emphasis was placed on understanding what the mantle meant to Elisha when he received it from Elijah. The New Testament research showed the impact of the community who was aligned with the vision of Jesus. The apostles who remained after Jesus was resurrected were able to grow the church with the power of the Holy Spirit and by remembering the mandate that Jesus gave to them. When the new church united together with an aligned vision they gave up what they had to benefit others. As a result, the church grew and found favor with the community.

The third chapter focused on the historical models of Enlightenment thinkers in addition to Civil Rights leadership and the Post-Modern area. This chapter identified the different ways that leadership training was done. In that study it was determined that different schools of thoughts changed how people were prepared to serve. There was a shift from industrialize training to more holistic training for employees.

Chapter four focused on the theological references on liberation theology, ecclesiology and womanist theology. The researcher also included a new theology called the theology of work which explains how our need to work is a result of how we were divinely created and connects us to the Spirit of God. The researcher used both secular business models and Christian leadership concepts to explore leadership alignment. This was highlighted in chapter five, which focused on the theoretical perspective. Many

businesses gain traction by pointing every department back to the mission of the company. The researcher also saw that some of our largest corporations such as Disney and others are still successful because of the way the vision of the founder has remained in the forefront.

Chapter six was the project analysis. The project included leadership profile interviews, pre and post-tests with training workshops and teaching. The participants for all analysis treatments were servant leaders of The Light Community Church. The results of the testing proved that the initial hypothesis of the researcher was true. The data suggests that having leadership training based on common core knowledge, focusing on the vision and mission of the church results in leadership alignment for the local church. It also showed that care should be taken when selecting servant leaders and that there should be some basic requirements to serve in leadership capacity. Authentic leadership alignment will take time but it will result in church growth and sustainable ministry for the future.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

I am writing this chapter to describe the ways in which my ministry interests and skills relate to the needs of the context for The Light Community Church. I will also determine how the relationship between this ministry interests and skills, along with the needs of the context can form the basis for the doctor of ministry project. Finally, I will share a theme statement and hypothesis on which to build the project.

The Light Community Church is located at 601 Azalea Avenue, Richmond, Virginia. The church started having services in the auditorium of Hermitage High School in September 2010. The second location was shared space with an established church named Parham Road Baptist Church, which was over fifty years old, and is predominately Caucasian. The people extended themselves to us for the sake of doing kingdom work. After two years of worshipping in the high school and one year doing ministry in shared space, God blessed The Light Community Church with a building in 2013. This has been the context since September 2013.

The church building sits on three acres of land that is predominately in Henrico County, with a very small plot that falls in the City of Richmond coordinates. Although this distinction is made on the property paperwork, the postal address identifies us as being located in Henrico County, which will be the focus area of this contextual analysis.

What started out as a primarily Caucasian demographic fifty years ago when the former church occupants (Stukeley Hall Baptist Church) was in our current building, has now changed to more urban with African Americans as its largest population.

Henrico County was established in 1634 and was one of the original counties of Virginia. It is named after Henry, Prince of Wales, the oldest son of King James I, of England.¹ It borders Richmond, Virginia which is the state capital and is comprised of five districts: Brookland, Fairfield, Three Chopt, Tuckahoe and Varina.

The church is located in the Fairfield District of Henrico County. Fairfield was a favorite name for large colonial estates in Virginia. In 1870, when Henrico County was divided into four townships, the name Fairfield was chosen because of the level fields located in this area.²

There are a few historical sites in this district, all of which are connected to the history of slavery and Colonial Williamsburg. The Brookhill, Enerdale, and Mankin Mansion are all buildings that have historic relevance in this community. Important to note is that the Brookhill property includes a cemetery for colonial residents of the past as well as a slave cemetery. The slave cemetery is unkempt with beds of weeds, while the cemetery of colonial residents sits in a pristine state of rest.³

There are several needs in my context. These were identified while analyzing the internal infrastructure, the church membership, as well as the community where the

¹ "History of Henrico," Henrico County Historical Society, accessed November 4, 2015, <http://www.henricohistoricalsociety.org/>.

² "History of Henrico," Henrico County Historical Society, accessed November 4, 2015, <http://www.henricohistoricalsociety.org/>.

³ "History of Henrico," Henrico County Historical Society, accessed November 4, 2015, <http://www.henricohistoricalsociety.org/>.

church is geographically located. Our church membership has turnover that seems to be on par with other churches in our area. However, as a newer church only five years old, we are in a season where our former practices, procedures, and structure needs to be revisited. The contextual analysis was pivotal in beginning that process.

We are facing many challenges. One relates to the number of people who are willing and ready to lead ministries. Although there are some who take the initiative to lead ministries, it seems difficult for them to find a replacement when they are ready to step down from their responsibilities. This is in spite of coaching for leaders to look for emerging leaders and invest appropriately in those who have a zeal for the ministry. The needs in the community can be met with programs such as tutoring or mentoring young people. Appeals have been made to the congregation and they have been slow to respond.

We have an issue with the quality of leadership and servant leader sustainability. This will certainly cause a challenge when trying to effectively impact the issues identified in the community. The pastor is not intended, designed or equipped to lead every area of the church and impact the community without the appropriate leadership to move the ministry work forward. The one who tries to do that will end up overwhelmed and essentially unproductive.

In my contextual analysis paper, I reviewed statistics related to our church membership population. Of the total membership of record, only 10% of the membership is teenagers. Fewer than 10% of children ages one month to twelve years old are official members of the church.⁴ We have more youth and children that visit and attend programs and events but those statistics cause contemplation.

⁴ "Servant Keeper Church Database," The Light Community Church, accessed November 11, 2015, <http://mylightcc.org>.

It should be noted that persons are considered to be members of the church when they have officially accepted Jesus Christ as Lord, been baptized and taken the appropriate one day New Membership Class. If someone has been baptized prior, we do not require them to be baptized again. However, because baptism at the church is done via immersion, we do offer that opportunity to any new member candidates who have been sprinkled. We have many young people who attend but have not met these requirements. In that case, they are listed in our database as “associate members” under the umbrella of their parent and guardian membership. This is an area for improvement.

As it relates to leadership, our church is just beginning to cultivate leaders that understand the DNA of The Light Community Church vision. The church is only five years old so everyone who is with us came from another context with different motives for joining a “new work.” Therefore, in an effort to do due diligence in assigning key leaders, such as diaconate and ministerial oversight, we had to allow some time to pass to determine who was called, qualified, and committed to serving with a higher level of responsibility.

The majority of our ministers have come licensed from other churches, with only two of them being licensed under our church vision. Likewise two of our deacons came to us already ordained. Earlier this year, we ordained our first two deacons under this branch of ministry. It is noted that those who were licensed and ordained here operate much more effectively than those who came from other backgrounds. This identifies both a practical reality and a leadership enhancement that is needed. The practical reality is that persons who are migrants into this church still have to unlearn some old practices to which they were accustomed.

Leadership enhancement is needed to ensure that those who come to us are properly indoctrinated or exposed to how things work at The Light Community Church, along with clear expectations of what ministerial support and diaconate support look like. This has been done at a foundational level, but will likely require revisiting. Revisiting this effort will include determining who would conduct the training if it is not managed by the pastor, and the commitment level of those who are already “credentialed.”

In addition to ministerial support and diaconate support that are specifically ministers and deacons, there are also challenges with our general servant leaders. Servant leaders include persons who are lay leaders that serve and support the ministries. Included with these would be hospitality ministries, video team, audio, and music ministry to name a few. The current servant leaders are predominately persons who have served before but not been in leadership roles.

As a result of there are persons who will try something for the first time, but are afraid of the title and responsibility of leadership, which includes a certain amount of commitment and the perception (be it assumed or reflected by the pastor) of being knowledgeable. Oftentimes, when there is a servant leader who has been consistent and faithful and serving a particular ministry area, they find it difficult to find a replacement when they are ready to move to other responsibilities.

One of the church’s challenges is not being effective in community outreach. While this is understandable in some respects because the church has only been in this neighborhood for two years, it does provide a need that should be evaluated for the project. We have some great things in place such as our food pantry, and clothing closet. We also have begun partnerships with local schools and organizations that are designed

to do social justice and we have already established some annual events that are designed to be a blessing to those in the community.

Some persons who are coming to the church are coming from different contexts of long standing established churches where the needs are built around tradition as opposed to tangible community outreach. There are also many new believers in the congregation who may do well in their careers outside of the religious contexts, but have never used their skills to support ministry work.

After a review of the contextual analysis, one of biggest challenges is how to develop and organize the people that are within the membership to be able to meet the key needs that have been discovered in the neighborhood that we are called to serve. If that cannot be accomplished in an appropriate timeframe, we will need to connect with other organizations to make more impact.

Our church tagline is to “impact lives with the love and light of Christ.” We are doing that, but need to provide more impact in the areas that were identified as needs. The mission of our church is stated as follows: “The Light” is on a mission to promote abundant life, draw souls to Christ, reclaim the disconnected and develop disciples that add light to the world through witness and works. Our Vision statement is as follows: To be a passionate community of faith that is relevant in our presentation of the gospel, relational in our witness to the world, relentless in our pursuit of God’s plan, and responsible for empowering and equipping ordinary people to be authentic ambassadors of Christ in their everyday lives.

Our church is located in the Fairfield District of Henrico. Some of the relevant statistics was the high percentage of unemployment in this community (10%) and the

decline of many of the local businesses and restaurants.⁵ This statistic connects to the need for employment and economic empowerment in the community, which is why there is an increased use of the church food pantry. During our recent Thanksgiving outreach, we also identified needs for children who may eat only at school. Hunger affects a child's ability to learn.

It was also determined that one of our nearby high schools has a graduation rate of 86%, which is the highest it has ever been.⁶ This means that there are still 14% of students at John Marshall High School that did not graduate. This statistic, in addition to the needs for tutoring at the other high school that we are near (Henrico High School), shows that there is also a need for educational empowerment in this community.

Some of the strengths that we have as a church is the way we do worship and special events for the purpose of Community Connections. These special events include the annual Easter Eggstravaganza, Community Block Party, and Thanksgiving outreach. An additional strength is that we have connected with both high schools and have church representatives on the Henrico High School Community outreach team and the John Marshall High School Community Advisory Council. There is sufficient support for leadership development at our church but are challenged with servant leader succession for ministries, high turnover of new members, and making an impact in the community in areas of economic empowerment, educational empowerment and employment empowerment.

⁵ "Zip Code 23227," City-Data.com, accessed November 11, 2015, <http://www.city-data.com/zip/23227.html>.

⁶ Verenda Cobbs, Community in Schools Coordinator for John Marshall High School, email to author, November 4, 2015.

Better equipping ministers and training servant leaders to support and encourage members to become authentic ambassadors of Christ will provide effective ministry implementation and strengthen the community. Not only will it cause us to more deeply align with the mission and vision, but also it will significantly increase impact in this community and systematically increase kingdom building capacity. Determining how to do this may be a substantial part of the doctoral project and may require an evaluation of training resources and methods of empowerment.

Ministry Journey

The skills that I bring to ministry are analytical and relational. The interests that I bring to ministry are in making things better and the personal fulfillment that I receive from making a difference. Also of significance, I bring a personal need to be authentic. This is something that should be reflected in the congregation as a whole, and it should start with me. Again, I reflect on the church vision empower and equip ordinary people to be authentic ambassadors of Christ.

Educationally and professionally, I received an accounting degree from Hampton University and began my career in the business sector. My relevant working experience was around being a bank teller, compliance officer, auditing and project management. Although degreed in accounting, I have never held a position where I was responsible for the details of debit and credit journal entries and the report development. My positions have led me to do more managerial oversight and determining feasibility. This has proven to be very helpful as I navigate through the pastoral journey. A relatively strong business

acumen supports the business part of ministry that some may either overlook or are unfamiliar.

This professional background would be the reason that I am more sensitive to the need for economic development and empowerment in the church context and community. Personally, I have always been a saver, even as a young child. It is interesting that I married someone who is not as sensitive to saving as I am and I am often frustrated with our difference around the issues of money and money management.

My spiritual autobiography also identified this need that I have to be an “improver.” In other words, there is something intrinsically connected to my need to “build” or improve something. My mentor pointed out in a peer session that I started my autobiography describing the house that I grew up in. I did this following the model of the book by Samuel Proctor, who described his house in the early part of the book.

Her comments caused me to reflect on the details that I shared about the house, in particular how it was renovated. I included how the original framework was “renovated” and additions were made as we grew up. This “builder” emphasis was also made, when I detailed how our church was given a church building and property and have already made significant “improvements” to it. This includes improvements to the internal structure such as upgrades and making it more contemporary to reflect the church’s contemporary culture. The basement was also renovated to provide more usable space and a playground and parking area was added to the outside. Obviously, there’s something about the opportunity to build, and improve utilization that feels personally satisfying, which is why God has placed me here in this community. I feel compelled to do something to

make it better. For me the idea of building is not just building structures but to build foundation that will allow people to live more abundantly.

In the latter employment positions before doing full time ministry, I was exposed to both private and public sector roles. I was responsible for serving with others on teams, either as a supervisor, or a project manager. This required me to use a variety of communication styles and to become familiar with group dynamics. I put an emphasis on oral and written communication and even now it frustrates me when people cannot sit down and discuss ministry. So often, there seems to be a pettiness when it comes to reasoning together but I realize that this is my way of doing things and is uncomfortable for so many.

In my last position in the marketplace, I was a supervisor for ten people who were older and had more experience in the department than I did. So I was the newcomer coming in to make improvements to a department that had already bonded, and gotten used to doing things. It thickened my skin, but also prepared me for times when something new is required in ministry, but there is resistance among those that you serve. So many people are comfortable with the status quo and often feel attacked when their normal is disrupted. This is why I try to be so careful when it comes to ministry transitions and personnel changes.

There is already some resistance from those persons who have done what they have been doing for a while. The thought and subsequent follow through to bring in “new blood” is intimidating to some who are happy to remain status quo with their small groups. I have recently expressed that good is good, but in order to be great there is a need to add another layer to the foundation and frame.

The other piece of my autobiographical sketch that falls in line with the contextual analysis is the notion of being authentic and the challenges that it faces. As a minister, familiarity breeds contempt. However, being relatable and relational builds rapport. In my youth primarily, there was a desire to have a particular “good girl” persona around my parents. I did not want them to see me as they had seen my sister in the past, which was rebellious and bold with it. Instead I hid my “bad girl” activities in order to receive “good girl” benefit and acceptance. Internally, I appreciated that I also had developed some “bad girl” credit with those who were not in my usual circle of associates.

With this in mind, I have to contemplate how this plays into my leadership. I see myself as authentic and I share very candidly with persons who I deal with about my current lifestyle, personal issues, and parenting challenges. I also receive a lot of feedback from members and co-laborers in the ministry that I am down to earth and “regular folk.” There is a need to ensure that I am not pushing off the expectation of “perfection” to leadership because that would attribute to the way folks are hesitant to become active in the leadership roles. Perhaps the fact that I take ministry so seriously and am such a workaholic gives the impression that I would expect that of them as well.

The church has four ordained deacons, seven licensed ministers, and three ministers in training. Two of our licensed ministers were licensed at The Light Community Church. The others have licenses from other churches that have been accepted at The Light Community Church. Our ministerial team is called A.O.L. which is an acronym for Ambassadors of Light. The group is made up of three licensed males

and one male who is in training, along with four females who are licensed and two females who are in training.

Two of our deacons were ordained this year at our first diaconate ordination service. They are both female. Prior to this ordination, we had two male deacons. One was ordained at his previous home church in Texas (Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church) and the other one is the pastor's husband. Now, the diaconate ministry consists of two males and two females. They have been given the primary responsibility for congregational care and have just recently started with new assignments in that area.

Trustees are not a part of the leadership structure. As a non-denominational church, an Executive Council provides administrative and church business oversight. A new Executive Council has been selected every two years. The first Executive Council navigated through the location transitions from worshipping in a school auditorium to sharing space with another church. They were also instrumental in reviewing the necessary paperwork and helped to prepare the congregation to move. The second Executive Council dealt heavily with the acquisition of the current property and were heavily involved in the renovation and enhancement process. They also implemented the hiring process for our first church employees. The next Executive Council will have a three-year term.

I have been told that I do have a lot of patience and I know that I extend grace to those who are serving in leadership. Opportunities are given to people to learn, to make mistakes and consistently implement what I call "shared wisdom." That means that before I ask anyone to do anything of significance, I dialogue with them to get their thoughts, opinions and feelings before giving an assignment. I also meet with leadership

and share vision, but always ask for ideas on how to get the vision accomplished. I always have a backup plan to whip out that will logistically get things done, but want to hear from others without being a dictator that has to know it all.

This type of leadership is comfortable to some but to others, it is overwhelming because I require people to think and come up with solutions with me, instead of giving orders, which they may have experienced in other settings. I have heard people tell me that they were not used to that level of involvement before. If it turns out that this is a turn off for our servant leaders, then it means that my expectations are too high and I need to revisit when people need to be expected to come up with their own ideas about leading ministries and serving others.

The proposed project is to develop a program that would create authentic ambassadors of Christ that are capable and willing to support the needs of the church and community. The convergence of the lack of leadership wherewithal and sustainability, as it connects with the needs of the community requires some investment in ensuring the mission and methods produce our desired mission and vision.

If the church is to develop disciples that add light to the world through witness and works, then the witness has to be strong in the context and the works should be connected to the ills of the community and those discovered in the congregation. Only then will we see some impact in empowering and equipping ordinary people to be authentic ambassadors of Christ in their everyday lives. Specific areas of leadership development would be as it relates to economic, employment, and educational empowerment. These three areas are the most prevalent concerns discovered during the contextual analysis review.

My ministerial strengths that would best lend itself to this project would be the project management, along with analytical strength and my genuine love for people. In addition, this type of project would meet my need to “build” or “improve” something. It will also be satisfying to encourage people who may feel intimidated to lead that they still have what it takes. I preach often about great things that come out of broken vessels. I teach often on the concept that broken crayons still color and to have an opportunity to put a program or training in place that would bring that point home would be extremely satisfying. However, along with that is my interest for people to participate in whatever is being created. The notion of “if you build it,” they will come, has been known to crumble in the church.

Three areas of empowerment would be the focus of this project: economic, educational and employment. The general nature and content of the proposed project would require some research of what other churches and organizations are doing to improve their communities in these three areas. It would also require me to work along with those leaders who are already in place at the church in order to determine how these areas of emphasis can be incorporated into our new member’s integration process.

In addition to looking at these areas, it might be necessary to determine how to develop the current congregation into those who would serve and support these needs, not just in the community but in the church. Finally, those persons in our congregation who desire to improve their educational, employment, or economic landscape should have opportunities to do so as a result of this project.

What I seek to learn from this project is whether I am being a good representative of the church’s vision and mission statement. I would also like to ensure that people are

being properly equipped to serve effectively. I believe that by doing this project, which will include research and some practical tests, the results will either confirm or deny whether I lead heavily with an authentic heart or if there is still some superficial covering of perfection that informs my leadership interactions and effectiveness.

Conclusion

The problem is that we do not have enough qualified, mission minded, vision led leaders to make an adequate impact in the church or community that we serve. As a result we are not creating enough leaders who are authentic ambassadors of Christ that are doing the work that the community needs the most. It should be noted that we do have a lot of people who are learning to be authentic in their faith, but there is still a small majority of those persons who serve within a church context.

The problem is based on the fact that the church has not yet done enough to provide leadership training that will make an impact to provide more economic, educational, or employment empowerment in the church and community. In addition, we do not have a process or criteria that is used to select potential leaders. With schools nearby there is still not enough for our youth to be involved at church, which is an area to develop. With the decline of businesses, we should be able to tap into the entrepreneurial spirit that some might have so that the vision that God has given is not aborted. Also with the high unemployment rate, we should partner more consistently with agencies and organizations that provide employment resources, or become a formidable hiring organization as a church.

Steps toward accomplishing this task would be to create relevant selection criteria for potential leaders, a training module, create empowerment resource connections, relevant partnerships, and participation that would support the needs. After the leadership and training module is completed provide opportunities for these ambassadors to serve and support an area of need within church and or community.

The anticipated outcome after the completion of this project would be that we would meet our objective of creating authentic ambassadors of Christ, help to lower the unemployment rate with job training and relevant connections, improve educational performance of students, and support economic growth in households, which in turn will translate into effectively building the community. This will give personal satisfaction, of making things better than the way it was found. To be more effective with community outreach and church operations would carry out my personal core values as well as the church mission.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

The Light Community Church in Richmond, VA is a new church start that began in September 2010. In reviewing the changes, growth, and various locations over the last five years several shifts have occurred that are deemed status quo for this type of ministry. However, there is one shift that was unexpected and came quickly in the life of the church. The new ministry was given a church building and three acres of land for free. This moved their location from a more suburban context to a more urban context. However, the vision and the mission of the ministry remained the same.

With this blessing came the burden of needing strong leadership, in addition to the pastor, who could serve on a consistent basis in order to make significant impact to the community that surrounds the church. This leadership team would be necessary to lead some of the new ministries needed for the permanently owned building which sits in a community with diverse socioeconomic levels and housing options. Since the church has many members who were baptized under its ministry covered and those who have not participated in any leadership responsibility before, the challenge of finding and maintaining appropriate leadership is compounded.

The church has gained ministers who were predominately licensed at other church locations/contexts, with only two licensures occurring under the Light Community Church process. This has caused the Senior Pastor to provide opportunities to ministers

based on need, without clearly understanding the previous levels of experience, passion, and exposure of those ministers. Ridley believes that the pastor is responsible for ensuring ministers have ample opportunities to use their gifts, talents and abilities “in house/at home” and sometimes have found that what the ministers say that they are experienced in doesn’t always fit or meet the expectations of the current context. This is true not only of the ministers of the gospel but others who come to the church with previous leadership experience at other churches.

While it has taken the church two years to really get to know the current community that surrounds the church, the contextual work revealed a problem that is worth further research and project development. New church starts that are mission minded are responsible for carrying out what it promises to do. Likewise, new church starts (i.e. plant churches) are often led by charismatic personalities that connect and draw others into relationship with God and others. Subsequently some of these relationships lead to church membership and initial church involvement.

While this type of draw is good for the entryway of church membership, there will not be sustainable spiritual or numeric growth if the church leadership team (both staff and lay leadership) do not carry similar foundational truths as the senior visionary leader. To explain further, there are persons who come in to the church on Sunday and receive dynamic worship, fellowship, a relevant word, thereby adhering to church mission but after joining the church, they may or may not find the same mission heart in various leadership personalities throughout the church. This could cause stagnation, separation, and even regret from members who experience this type of mismatch.

So far, the church has not had significant turnover, which means that people are still remaining connected even if they have experienced a different level of ministry mid week than they did on Sundays. In addition, the church is still consistently receiving new members. However, there are clearly different levels of passion, involvement and follow through for those who serve in ministries, including servant leaders. It is necessary to develop people who will serve with the missional DNA that keeps the congruency of passion and purpose throughout the ministerial life of the church. Finally, it is necessary to ensure that the current leadership training program at the church can properly ascertain, or teach the “soft skills” needed to avoid ministerial mismatch.

The problem that has been selected for further review is related to a leadership mismatch in a mission-minded ministry context. When there is a mismatch of ministry leaders and ministry vision, mission ministry will not be sustainable in the local church. This will in turn prevent the church members and community at large from benefitting by the church. This problem is the rationale to conduct research and determine what is required in order for leadership to be properly aligned with church mission and vision to ensure sustainable, effective, viable ministry for years to come. This type of sustainability will benefit those church members and the community members who may or may not become a part of the local church body.

In the Old Testament, the foundational scripture will be 1 Kings 19:19-21 when Elijah throws the mantle on his protégée, Elisha while he is working in the field. The New Testament scripture foundational scripture is in Acts 2:42-47 where the people of the first church were able to come together in unified manner to give the community what it needed.

This chapter will include the biblical foundations as well as some connection that these texts have in common with the current context. The Old Testament scripture will be surveyed and described first, with its contextual significance, followed by the New Testament scripture with its significance. The summary will give a general overview of the research performed.

Old Testament

The Old Testament scripture is 1 Kings 19:19-21 and it reads as follows:

So Elijah went from there and found Elisha son of Shaphat. He was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen, and he himself was driving the twelfth pair. Elijah went up to him and threw his cloak around him. Elisha then left his oxen and ran after Elijah. “Let me kiss my father and mother goodbye,” he said, “and then I will come with you.” “Go back,” Elijah replied. “What have I done to you?” So Elisha left him and went back. He took his yoke of oxen and slaughtered them. He burned the plowing equipment to cook the meat and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he set out to follow Elijah and became his servant.¹

This text is often referred to as The Call Story of Elisha, when Elijah the current prophet of Israel comes to identify him as a leader who is worthy of doing ministry work. The name “Elijah” means ‘my God is Yahweh’ and reflects his character as a man totally dedicated to God. His miracles are all consistently used by God to teach faith. They represent signs, which call their witnesses to make a monumental decision. In each scenario, someone must decide if they are going to be for or against God. This is most clearly demonstrated on Mt. Carmel when Elijah challenged the followers of Baal, accusing them of wavering between two opinions, (1 Kings 18:21).²

¹ Biblical citations within this document are from the New International Version unless stated otherwise.

² Paul D. Gardner, *New International Encyclopedia of Bible Characters: The Complete Who's Who in the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 149.

First and Second Kings was originally regarded as one book in the Hebrew canon; the division into two books of approximately equal length appeared first in the Septuagint and finally entered the Hebrew Bible in the fifteenth century A.D. The book itself is anonymous, and information about its author can only be deduced by examining the concerns and perspectives of the work. The Babylonian Talmud (*Baba Bathra* 15a) attributes Kings to Jeremiah.³ Substantial portions are given to the lives of the prophets: sixteen to forty-seven chapters are devoted to the lives of Elijah and Elisha (1 Kgs. 17–2 Kgs. 10).⁴

The primary message of Elijah was to call many in Israel back to faith in God. However, it received a different reaction than the miracles because his messages were directed to the kings and queens. In contrast, his miracles were deliberately done to those in the community who were often oppressed at the hands of the kings and queens. His relationship with King Ahab was the most significant example of the clarity of his message of repentance on the part of leadership. When Ahab did not repent he eventually died of a horrible bowel disease, and was not mourned by his subjects, all of which had been prophesied by Elijah. He had received many warnings and was given plenty of opportunity to repent, but failed to do so.⁵

The Lord had instructed Elijah to anoint Elisha in verse sixteen, after Elijah had experienced seasons of depression, burn out, and feeling isolated and alone. Elijah is described as a man who was lonely, and this loneliness encompassed every part of his

³ Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 1278.

⁴ Elwell and Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, 1280.

⁵ Gardner, *New International Encyclopedia*, 150.

life. This feeling is one that is well recognized by many pastoral leaders, which are not called to minister alone, but are called by God at some point along the journey to connect with others to support kingdom work.

Earlier in Chapter nineteen, Elijah talks to God about his initial zeal about his assignment, which was prior to the realization of the danger that was involved with the prophetic assignment. The Israelites had rejected the covenant, were killing prophets, and as far as he was concerned, he was next in line for their abuse. God told Elijah to stand on the mountain and he would see the Lord pass by. Elijah obediently stood there. The winds came, but the Lord was not in the wind. Yet, he stood on the mountain.

An earthquake came through, but the Lord was not in the earthquake, (1 Kgs. 19:11). After the earthquake was a fire, and then there was a quiet voice. (1 Kgs. 19:12). It was at the sound of the quiet voice that Elijah moved to the opening of a cave and then received further instructions from the Lord. These instructions, noted in verses fifteen through eighteen were the ones that sent Elijah forward to locate and anoint Elisha as a co-laborer and subsequently his successor in prophetic ministry. The method that God used to provide instructions for Elijah's ministry was a new one. He was used to doing miracles and receiving miracles that were done in grand fashion, but now, as God sends him to find his successor; the voice of instruction comes as a miracle that was softly spoken.⁶

Obediently, Elijah moved forward to find Elisha. Elisha was working in the field when he was called. Elijah found Elisha "while he was plowing with twelve pairs of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth" (1 Kgs. 19:19). This seems to indicate that Elisha

⁶ Gardner, *New International Encyclopedia*, 152.

belonged to a family of considerable wealth. To obey the prophetic call would mean doing so at a considerable personal loss, financially speaking because he would be required to leave the business. It would mean counting the costs. It meant counting his financial security as loss and becoming a soldier of the Lord in the trenches of a tremendous spiritual conflict. Elisha's responses in verses twenty and twenty-one show us he was a man of faith who was willing to do just that.⁷

According to Keathley's research, Elisha had developed biblical values, priorities and eternal perspectives that had captured his heart, which then controlled what he did with his life. As a result, he acted on his faith by following God's call. He was willing to be uprooted from his quiet, peaceful, and rural life with its financial security to follow the Lord. Like the sons of Issachar, he understood the times and knew what he must do (1 Chron. 12:32).⁸

In Hebrew, the name "Elisha" means 'my God saves.'⁹ It is also important to note that Elijah found Elisha working. Though he belonged to a prominent family, he was at work in the field with the rest of the field hands. Though wealthy, he was not irresponsible or lazy. This did not make him a leader, but it certainly demonstrated he had already developed the kind of character needed for leadership. Not only did hard work build character, it gave him a testimony to those around him.¹⁰

⁷ J. Hampton Keathley II, "Taking Your Mantle," Bible.org, accessed April 26, 2016, <https://bible.org/seriespage/17-taking-your-mantle-1-kings-1919-21>.

⁸ Keathley II, "Taking Your Mantle," Bible.org, accessed April 26, 2016, <https://bible.org/seriespage/17-taking-your-mantle-1-kings-1919-21>.

⁹ Gardner, *New International Encyclopedia*, 155.

¹⁰ Keathley II, "Taking Your Mantle," Bible.org, accessed April 26, 2016, <https://bible.org/seriespage/17-taking-your-mantle-1-kings-1919-21>.

This seems to be a valid trait among the persons chosen by God; they are already doing something to prepare them for the work of the ministry, even if it in situations that do not seem to have kingdom significance. A case in point is the calling of the disciples by Jesus. All of them were called at a time when they were doing what they had been trained to do, such as fishing. Jesus explained that he would take what they already knew and turn it into what was needed. In essence, promoting them in the kingdom realm to “fishers of men.” (Mark 1:17). Like Elisha, these disciples had to be willing to leave what they were comfortable with to step into the new territory of Christian service.

Elisha does not come immediately with Elijah, but still has some unfinished business that he wants to take care of, (v. 20). “Let me kiss my father and mother goodbye.” The twentieth verse is reflective of current day servant leaders. Many persons are working in the field but often are connected to prior influential relationship. It may take time for them to be ready to move ahead with new vigor and vision. In other words, they may have a good work ethic but are not ready to merge their ethic into a new ministry environmental context.

Elijah throws his cloak, or mantle, upon Elisha. This is a symbolic way of transferring the prophetic power from one man to the next. Elisha says farewell to his family then slaughters his oxen and burns his plow, which demonstrates the clear break between his old and new lives. Jesus reflects on this type of separation when he states, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:62). Elisha seems to know he must take a single-minded approach to the

difficult task he will assume. For now, he recedes into the background of the story but will step forward again in 2 Kings 2:1.¹¹

A few things should be noted to address the understanding that Elisha had for his new assignment. He understood that the mantle or cloak meant that he was being admitted or connected as a spiritual son to Elijah. He also understood that this work would supersede any other work that he has done. This is evidenced by the fact that he goes back to say goodbye to his loved ones, then burns all of his current inventory and uses the meat for a going away party, showing a clear delineation between the current life as a power, and the future life of a prophet for God.

Elijah ranks next to Moses among the mighty prophets of the Old Testament, a strange, wild figure of a man, often compared to John the Baptist, in that he was a dweller of the wilderness, garbed only in a shaggy coat of skins, girded with a belt of leather. The overcoat, or mantle described in the text is likely made of sheep's skin.¹²

The history of Elijah may be regarded as threefold, dealing first with his great public mission of overthrowing the worship of Baal in Israel, then with his personal life, the personal revelations and teachings given him by the Lord, and thirdly with the special mission of reproof and awakening to King Ahab. The life of Elijah, like that of his disciple, Elisha, was wholly given to Israel, not to Judah. The latter kingdom drops for a time quite out of sight, during the vigorous chapters of Kings, which tell of these two men.

¹¹ Paul R. House, *1, 2 Kings, New American Commentary*, (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1995), 225.

¹² Keathley II, "Taking Your Mantle," Bible.org, accessed April 26, 2016, <https://bible.org/seriespage/17-taking-your-mantle-1-kings-1919-21>.

Of the early days of Elijah no information is provided in the scriptures. He appears to us suddenly as he did to Israel's king. He is introduced in the Bible merely as "the Tishbite," a name that may refer to a town of Gilead, or may mean rather "the stranger." He came from the far regions east of Jordan, and stood like a wild man, a savage, before the haughty noblemen of Israel.¹³

Elijah was able to do many miracles under the anointing power of God. Significant impact and ministry milestones were made during his time. Elisha was a ministry partner for Elijah in prophetic leadership, and a successor, which is someone who continues to do the work after the departure of the leader. Much like Moses and Joshua, they spent time with each other prior to Elijah's departure. In order for ministry hearts to be matched, there must be a well- established pattern of relational equity. In other words, people cannot carry on with the ministry in any consistent manner if they do not understand the ministerial heart and convictions of the visionary leader.

This idea of relational equity and unified purpose is also demonstrated later in the biblical text. Elisha desired a double portion of Elijah's anointing as noted in 2 Kings 2: 8-10 says,

Elijah took his cloak, rolled it up and struck the water with it. The water divided to the right and to the left, and the two of them crossed over on dry ground. When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?" "Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit," Elisha replied. "You have asked a difficult thing," Elijah said, "yet if you see me when I am taken from you, it will be yours—otherwise, it will not.

This indicates that Elijah had some requirements of Elisha. In order for Elisha to receive what he desired from his mentor, he had to be present and available with him until it was

¹³ Charles Horn and Julius Brewer, *The Bible and Its Story*, vol. 5, *History-Poetry: II Chronicles to Psalms*, accessed April 3, 2016, Logos Software.

time for him to leave. This particular requirement relates to the need for leaders to spend enough time with the Senior Pastor or Visionary in order to connect in a spiritual manner, not just superficially. While many people will not outwardly ask for a double portion of the pastor's anointing in this day and time, it is understood that common spiritual threads among key leadership will benefit the sustainability of kingdom work.

The miraculous works done by both Elijah and Elisha were primarily connected to helping people survive in the midst of bleak environmental circumstances. Victor Matthews explains that the miracles of these two prophets were not authorizations of their power but an indictment of the misuse of monarch's power.¹⁴ Virtually all of their miracles related to feeding and protecting, thus demonstrating God's ability to protect and provide for people in the community even when the socioeconomic climate was not conducive to what was needed. In essence, God's provision comes through the hands of appointed prophets even when the official governmental authority has not been provided for them.

For example, monarchs would take widows sons and draft them to the army, where they would often die. In contrast, Elijah raised the son of the widow of Zarapheth, and brought him back to life through the power of God (1 Kgs. 17:17-24). Monarchs taxed widows, taking from those who were already poor but Elijah gave the widow an endless supply of oil and flour (2 Kings 4:1-7). When a borrowed axe was lost, that was needed to clear land; Elisha returned it so the lender would not have to foreclose on the land in order to pay for the axe (1 Kgs 6:1-7).¹⁵

¹⁴ Victor H. Matthews, *Social World of the Hebrew Prophets* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishing Company, 2001), 34.

¹⁵ Matthews, *Social World of the Hebrew Prophets*, 34.

A pastor of the church serves in a priestly and prophetic role. In the prophetic role, the pastor serves as one who desires to make positive change in the community based on the relevant challenges that individuals are facing. As noted in Matthew's references, the community is only benefitted when God's appointed vessels are able to meet the needs of the people, even when they are impoverished, underserved, or in a community where the government cannot adequately support the need. Elijah and Elisha had similar hearts and connection to God's vision to meet these provisional and protection requirements for the needy. Their efforts provided economic empowerment for those in the community.

Elijah bears two titles indicating his status as a spokesman of Yahweh and as a powerful individual: 1) a prophet (1 Kgs. 18:22, 36; 19:16; Mal. 3:18; 2 Chr. 21:12) and 2) man of God; (1 Kgs. 17:24; 2 Kgs. 1:10). These two titles describe two central aspects of his character: he was a prophet proclaiming the word of Yahweh and a powerful individual in close contact with the divine realm. Elijah is emblematic of the way in which prophets operate in the Deuteronomistic history, royal politics, military affairs, natural disasters (i.e., drought), religious practice, and worship all fall within the realm of authority of the prophet. For example, he abruptly appears in the book of Kings to deliver an oracle to King Ahab that God will withhold rain (1 Kgs. 17:1).

One key theme of the Elijah cycle is that of prophetic succession. Elijah is cast in the mold of Moses when he proclaims the word of Yahweh on Mount Carmel (1 Kgs. 18:19–40) and meets Yahweh on Mount Horeb, as Moses did on Sinai (1 Kgs. 19:9–18). In this way, Elijah represents the Deuteronomistic idea of prophetic authority being passed down in Mosaic succession. Elijah's call for the people's repentance echoes the

same summons given by all the prophets before him. Similarly, the rejection and persecution Elijah faces represents that of the prophets in Mosaic succession with him.

An important aspect of the Elijah cycle is the conflict with Baal and Baalism. The Old Testament commonly refers to Baal as the singular Canaanite deity who represents the varieties of religious worship rejected by Yahwistic monotheism. Baal in Hebrew simply means “lord, owner” (בעל, *ba'al*), there is an inherent ambiguity in the term.

New Testament

The New Testament scripture is Acts 2:42-47, which read:

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

This text does not clearly define leadership characteristics or a particular sustainability model on which one could duplicate. However, it does demonstrate what mission ministry looks like when visionary leaders have properly equipped the body of Christ to “be” the church. In essence, the text describes the results of mission ministry matches: the community is positively benefitted and the Great Commission is ultimately fulfilled.

This text was selected because as a community church there is a particular concern and desire to make an impact in the community, regardless of whether the community members worship with the church members. If servant leaders are not properly connected with that part of the mission, then this type of work will not be

consistently carried out. The goal is to ensure that the community of faith would all experience tangible benefits as well as spiritual growth.

The Greek word *praxis* (acts) was employed in the larger culture to identify great deeds of either historical or mythological characters. This book describes the activities of the great ancestors of the church, which include the apostles.¹⁶ The author is the same author of Luke and some put the two books together and called them Luke-Acts. Christianity is not a new religion at this time; rather, it is the fulfillment of the hopes of Judaism in Israel's scriptures. The movement that is described is not called Christianity but "The Way." Many of the speeches in Acts devote a lot of attention to the fulfillment of scripture in order to demonstrate the connection between Judaism and the movement initiated by Jesus.¹⁷

J. Bradley Chance describes another major theme in Acts is that of being a community of faith. Contemporary Christians would normally be asked to sell all of their possessions and lay the proceeds at the foot of the apostles because it would be too difficult in these times to determine the true apostles. However there are central practices of the first church that made it successful, and these characteristics of a healthy church should notably be considered when evaluating leadership for mission matters.

Prayer was a crucial dimension of community life. Prayer made things happen. Fellowship, the breaking of bread is also an integral part of community life because it requires the presence of people, flesh and blood human beings, not just the presence of the Holy Spirit. Fellowship in Acts is not an abstract notion but it requires face-to-face

¹⁶ J. Bradley Chance, "Acts," in *Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary* (Macon, GA: Smyth and Helwys Publishing, 2007), 1.

¹⁷ Chance, "Acts," 12.

interaction among the people of faith.¹⁸ This is something that is often difficult to coordinate in today's culture because of all of things that are competing for our time.

In reviewing our foundational text, it is also important to understand the process of leadership that was necessary before the disciples could begin their ministry. First, according to Acts 1:12-26, they had to ensure that they had the right number of disciples on the team. Judas was no longer available since he had betrayed Jesus and committed suicide. Therefore, the original group of twelve was now a group of eleven. The number twelve in biblical terms and numerology is understood to be the number of divine order. With that understanding, it would stand to reason that they would select a replacement for Judas. According to verses twenty-one and twenty-two in Acts the first chapter, the replacement was to come from among one of the men (andron) who had accompanied Jesus throughout his public ministry and shared fellowship with Jesus after the resurrection. It was imperative that the replacement be able to bear witness to the resurrection in order to be effective.¹⁹

The process for selecting the replacement leader is significant to this review since leadership sustainability and finding the right match for mission ministry is in the heart of this work. Peter was the spokesperson in Acts One who begins the process of reconstituting the twelve. He does this by reminding the people who had gathered, which were believed to be 120 people (Acts 1:15). In his first speech he compares the fate of Judas with the prophetic scriptures, thus casting scriptural significance to the place they find themselves, which is not whole in number. He ends this speech with the criteria to

¹⁸ Chance, "Acts," 24.

¹⁹ Chance, "Acts," 41.

become one of the twelve and a proposal of how to move forward with the selection.²⁰ In essence, these are the leadership requirements that would allow the group to remain viable and sustainable in order to continue the work of Jesus.

Two men were put forward to replace Judas: Matthias and Joseph Barabbas, who was also called Justus. Based on the details provided about Joseph, one might think that he would be the selected candidate. However, when they used the process of casting lots, and the lot fell on Matthias, which seemed to surprise some. This writer reflects that this is true for many of the leaders chosen by God to do great works. They may not fit the descriptions or the expectations of human understanding, but are still the right kingdom fit for the ministry job at hand.

Prayer and casting lots were the means of selection (Acts 1:26) for Matthias. This was a traditional means within Judaism to determine God's will. This process is described in the Old Testament books of Leviticus (16:8), Numbers (various texts), Joshua (19:1-40), 1 Chronicles 26: 12-16), Micah (2:5) and Jonah (1: 7-8). To cast lots, stones were marked to designate certain persons and places in a jar or a bag. The container was shaken until a stone fell out determine the one on whom "the lot fell." Although that may seem like a chance to move in our culture now, such as the game of heads or tails on a coin, this type of activity was viewed as divinely determined. Before Pentecost without the Holy Spirit to lead and guide in these types of decision the church sought the direction of God by using this Old Testament procedure.²¹

²⁰ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Early Christian Community, Reconstitution of the Twelve," in *The Anchor Bible: The Acts of the Apostles: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 218.

²¹ John B. Polhill, "Acts," in *The New American Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1992), 41.

They also spend a significant amount of time together in the upper room. This upper room is believed to be the same place where the disciples had their last meal with Jesus and seems to have become a semi-permanent gathering place of residence in Jerusalem.²² This point is mentioned as another support for relational equity among servant leaders and pastors, which may even include a common place where folks gather to fellowship, pray and wait on their “help” or support. This upper room mentioned in scripture is also believed to be the place where they received the promise of Jesus, which was to send them a comforter before they continued his work. The direct instruction was for them to wait there until they received it.

The second chapter of Acts describes one of the major fulfillments of Jesus and one of the major successes of the early church. Before we get to the fact of what the church was able to do together, we should also be mindful of the catalyst that was providentially sent to give them power according to the biblical account. After the discipleship group was made whole by the addition of Matthias, they then receive the Holy Spirit in Acts 2: 1-13, which propels Peter to preach his first sermon under the power of this Spirit (Acts 2: 14-36). Those twelve disciples, led primarily by Peter were retrained and re-schooled on the vision and commission that Jesus had established.

They received the Holy Spirit while they were all in the same place. The event is called the time of Pentecost. The term “pentekoste” (fiftieth day) occurs as a translation of the Feast of Weeks in the Apocrypha.²³ This is another example of the leadership being in place and being positioned to receive what they needed to empower and fulfill

²² Chance, “Acts,” 38.

²³ Luke Timothy Johnson and Daniel J. Harrington, “Pentecost: The Gift of the Spirit,” in *SACRA PAGINA*, vol. 5, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Collegeville, MN: The Order of Saint Benedict Inc., 1992.), 42.

them to do work for the greater good. With the full team in place empowered by the promise of Christ, fulfilled by the Holy Spirit (i.e. Comforter) they could move forward to continue “The Way” movement.

Demetrius Williams shares an interesting perspective and culturally biased commentary on Acts Two. Africans Americans in particular are addressed by referencing the issues of slavery, human unity, racism, and segregation, while black women in particular could find justification for their ministry here basically because this text lends itself to the issues of unity and equality in ministry. The chapter begins with the experience of *glossolalia* (speaking in tongues), which was believed to be the Holy Spirit manifested in the life of the church to empower people to do ministry in various contexts and countries.²⁴

The way Luke describes the early community is reflected in Dt. 15: 4-11 in which Israel is challenged to observe the law of God in such a manner that no one would be in need. It is also striking that the Gospel of Luke includes a constant theme of the poor. However in the book of Acts, the word "poor" is never used. The apparent theme of the foundational scripture in Acts is related to money but behind this theme is the understanding of the mission of the church, which is to concretely address the issue of poverty.²⁵ The prophetic nature of the work that Elijah and Elisha did clearly aligns with this theme in the New Testament scripture.

This text is often taken as a description of the ideal Christian community. It is united around the apostles’ teaching, fellowship, prayer, sharing, and praise. The

²⁴ Brian K. Blount, “The Acts of the Apostles,” in *True to Our Native Land: An African American Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007), 218.

²⁵ Blount, “The Acts of the Apostles,” 221.

“breaking of bread” (Acts 2:42) refers to the Communion service.²⁶ Quite possibly verse forty-two should be viewed separately, as a conclusion to the Pentecost narrative. Thus viewed, it provides a glimpse into the manner in which the new converts were incorporated into the believing community. The believers are said to have “devoted themselves” to four practices in their new life together. First was the teaching of the apostles. Just as the apostles had been instructed by Jesus, now they passed along that instruction to the new Christians. In keeping with Jesus’ teaching to them (Chapter 1), this would have included such subjects as his resurrection, the Old Testament Scriptures, the Christian witness, and surely their own reminiscences of Jesus’ earthly ministry and teachings. The second activity to which they devoted themselves was “the fellowship.” The Greek word used here (*koinōnia*) is one Paul often employed, but it appears only here in all of Luke-Acts. Its basic meaning is “association, communion, fellowship, close relationship.” In secular Greek it could involve the sharing of goods.²⁷

The key may be to see the terms “breaking of bread” and “prayer” in opposition to “fellowship.” The meaning would then be that they devoted themselves to a fellowship that was expressed in their mutual meals and in their prayer life together. If this is the case, then the meaning of the third element, “the breaking of bread,” would be further clarified. Joined with fellowship, it would likely carry the cultic sense of sharing a meal with the Lord, participating in the Lord’s Supper.

It probably also involved their participation in a main *agapē* meal together. The fourth and final element of their life together, another expression of their fellowship, was

²⁶ L. O. Richards, *The Bible Reader’s Companion* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1991), 709, accessed April 11, 2016, Logos Software.

²⁷ Polhill, *The New American Commentary*, 118-119.

“the prayers.” The presence of the article in the Greek text before prayers has led some interpreters to see this as a reference to their keeping the formal prayer hours of Judaism in the temple. They may well have done so to some extent, for their faithfulness in attending temple worship is noted in Acts 2:46 and Acts 3:1. The reference, however, is probably much broader and involves primarily their sharing in prayer together in their private house worship.²⁸ Verses forty-three through forty-six thus would appear to introduce a new section that deals with the life of the whole Christian community and to prepare for the narratives of the witness in Jerusalem that follow in chapters three through five.

“And all that believed were together, and had all things common” (v. 44). The fellowship was not only in prayers, nor in doctrine alone, but also in social relations. “And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.” See what fear was wrought in them! “And they parted them,” he says, showing the wise management: “As every man had need.”

Not recklessly, like some philosophers among the Greeks, of whom some gave up their land, others cast into the sea great quantities of money; but this was no contempt of riches, but foolishness. Universally the devil has made it his endeavor to disparage the creatures of God, as if it were impossible to make good use of riches. “And continuing daily with one accord in the temple” (v. 46), they enjoyed the benefit of teaching. “And breaking bread from house to house, did take their portion of food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people” (v. 47).

²⁸ Polhill, “Acts,” 120.

How did they receive favor with all the people? It is suggested that the favor was based on their almsgiving deeds, which is best translated as the way they were able to meet the needs of those in the community. For do not look to the fact, that the chief priests were envious and rose up against them, but rather consider that “they had favor with the people.” “And the Lord added to the Church daily (ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό) [together] such as should be saved. And all that believed were together.” Once more, the unanimity, the charity, which is the cause of all good things!²⁹

While they may not have received the applause or kudos from political powers that be, the community recognized the Christ followers (i.e. people of the Way) as those who were unified with each other in mission and vision and committed to the care of the disenfranchised and underserved. This section of the Bible is often called in subheading The Fellowship of the Believers. Luke gives us a glimpse of the everyday life of the first Christians. They enjoy a wonderful unity, as they learn together from the apostles and share their meals and times of prayer.

God is with them! His presence overflows in the miracles of the apostles and the love of the church members. The church grows, because this way of life is so genuine and attractive.³⁰ This type of unity began with the zeal and unification of the leadership that spent time with the people and had spent time with Jesus Christ.

²⁹ P. Schaff et al., *Saint Chrysostom: Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistle to the Romans*, vol. 11 (New York, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1889), 45-46.

³⁰ A. Knowles, *The Bible Guide* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing, 2001), 540-541.

Summary

The Old Testament and New Testament texts serve as great foundations to cracking the code on leadership mismatches. There should be intentionality placed on how a leader is selected, how the vision is communicated, the understanding that the supporting leadership has about what their role is and the quality amount of investment that is made between a visionary leader and the supporting leadership whether lay or clergy.

In the Old Testament scripture Elijah served as the visionary leader and his prophesies and assignments were given from God. This type of assignment should only be taken as a direct mandate from God. Indeed, there will be times of isolation, burn out and even times when you feel like you would rather not take on such a task. In each of these moments, God provides for the visionary leader just as God did for Elijah. Not only did God provide sustenance for Elijah's physical body, but also he provided spiritual support and rest for his body under the Juniper Tree. Our biblical text comes as God answers another need for Elijah, a need for help and a successor.

All pastors, whether those who are called into a church or those who are called to start a new ministry work, will need support. When God gave Elijah the assignment to anoint Elisha, it was a way to make a divine connection to go along with the divine calling. Elijah has to hear the voice of God on what to do in the midst of standing on a mountain.

Elijah obediently stands on the mountain in the midst of all kinds of weather conditions. Although God promised that He would show up with further instructions, he does not show up in the loud, noisy atmospheric conditions. He shows up while Elijah

patiently waits and is able to hear the quiet voice of God's instruction. This is where he understands that Elisha will be a new part of his ministry.

Leaders must understand the importance of hearing from God and looking for God to show up in the quiet still places of ministry. It is not always going to be in the shout, the hoop, or the holler or in the times of loud fanfare that God makes his instructions clear but if we are willing to wait until the appointed time, God will show us where our physical help will come from.

Another important characteristic of avoiding leadership mismatch in ministry is to examine what the person has done before their new providential assignment. For Elisha, he was found working in the field. This is a good characteristic to have in leadership, since it shows work ethic even if it does not show a particular spiritual gift at work. Elisha was from an upper class background, but yet he still was working with oxen and not just passing the duties off to hired hands which he could have done.

People who are going to be the right fit in ministry should have a ministry work ethic prior to them being given an assignment. It would seem difficult to have someone to be committed to a leadership assignment in the church if they have not shown sustainability or consistency in some of the basic principles of church life. Even something as simple as being consistent in worship, being a faithful giver or jumping in to give a hand is a good start in determining ministry potential.

Elisha also had a certain amount of spiritual understanding about leadership and serving assignments. He did not take the mantle for granted. He knew that this was symbolic of the next stage of his life. He was willing to depart from the current secular situation in order to fully step into the new spiritually chosen role. If a leader is going to

be effective in the life of the church, they must see the value of doing a new thing and to do it for the right reasons. Elisha burned everything he owned before, said good bye to his mother and father and then went off with Elijah. This is similar to the way the New Testament disciples left all that they were doing to follow the Messiah into the ministry of becoming “fishers of men.”

Saying good-bye to old church hurt and the old way of doing things can be difficult to new leaders, especially if they are going to serve in a newer church start. People come with preconceived ideas and past experiences that might hinder them from being able to fully commit to a new vision and mission. As Elisha said good-bye to his old occupation, leaders should eventually separate from previous leadership models that are contrary or in conflict with the vision of the new calling. It is not expected to happen overnight but will require some intentional training for those who will be placed in authority. In other words, it is imperative for the visionary leader to take enough time to integrate them into an understanding of what this new “family” looks like. Although it is not expected that old occupations or even current workplace positions are literally left behind, or that their connections to their families are jeopardized by being a part of church leadership, but the dedication to that calling should be evident among the leadership.

A term called “relational equity” was mentioned several times to describe the investment of time, attention and foundational relationship values that are necessary for successful leadership. This becomes the catalyst by which the vision and mission is shared not just by words but also by demonstration. There should be a sense of empowerment that comes as a result of relational equity. It would be the hope that leaders

would serve others with the similar heart and foundational commitment of the visionary leader.

When Elisha spent time with Elijah, he experienced miracles with him. When he spent time with Elijah he understood the power of the mantle experientially. Later, Elisha was able to use that mantle to do miracles of his own after Elijah was no longer with him.

Elijah and Elisha had a particular call to help citizens of communities who would not be supported by officials of the land. Such is the case for community-based church as the Great Commission is carried out. Churches should be looking for ways to serve others in a society that often overlooks the disenfranchised, and underserved. When Elijah served as a catalyst to supply food resources to the widow at Zarephath, it was an example of this type of ministry calling in our context.

Elisha requested a double portion of Elijah's anointing which on the surface seems self-centered and arrogant. However, Elijah used that as a teachable moment and used it as a way to test Elisha's investment in the ministry and commitment to him by giving him the following instruction, "if you stay close to me and hang with me until I leave you, then your request will be granted." A great leadership practice among those who desire the right match between leader and vision is to see how long they are willing to stay with the work and how committed they are to the senior visionary. This does not mean that the senior pastor or visionary should be worshipped, but there should be some level of honor given to the role that he or she carries. The ability to stay with it through various seasons of life, will allow more of the leadership heart to come into agreement with the goals of the house.

In the New Testament scripture reference, we find the results of what happens when the leadership is aligned. While the focus of the scripture is not on the leadership, it does show the results of having a leadership team that is unified in vision, mission and purpose. It's interesting to note that a part of the process for the early church leadership was to make the leadership team whole. Instead of the eleven disciples that started with them in Acts, chapter one, it was important for them to find a replacement for Judas, which gave them the number twelve like they started with. Matthias was Judas's replacement through the draw of lots.

This practice of drawing lots would not work well today since it would be considered a game of chance. Therefore, there should be some qualities that one should look for in any leadership role where there is a replacement needed. In addition, it should be noted that the senior pastor or senior leadership team should have an idea of what amount of leadership is the right amount to cover the contextual needs of the church and community. In other words, how many people does it take to effectively run the church life in a sustainable and vision-oriented manner?

The people of "The Way" found favor with the community because their needs were met. Their needs were met because of the type of unity that was found among the disciples of Christ. Seemingly through the results of their unified efforts, the first church also found favor with God, albeit for a short season. Thousands were added to the body of believers and daily they were having people come into the knowledge of the way.

The movement all started when the apostles spent time with Jesus and understood the mandate of the great commission and followed that after Jesus resurrection. The requirements for the new apostle was that it had to be someone who had spent time with

Jesus because they knew that they would have firsthand knowledge of the way the Jesus lived, served, and walked out his purpose on earth.

These two foundational scriptures and their supporting proof texts, along with the relevant research provide great foundation to the work that needs to be done in the church context. Re-evaluation of the selection, spiritual maturity, relational equity and effectiveness in working with others are all key themes that will need to be considered when determining what appropriate leadership personnel needs to embrace in order to provide sustainable mission ministry in the local church.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

In a new church start, leaders should be trained to embrace and apply the vision and mission strategy across the church. This will ensure alignment that will provide sustainability needed for continued growth. If there is a mismatch in leadership from the mission and vision then the church will not be able to sustain the level of growth that the church is experiencing. This may result in membership turnover and or servant turnover.

The Light Community Church is in a season where more specific leadership training and development is needed to produce more evident leadership alignment. In the first few years of the church, many of the leaders were selected based on desire, passion and availability to serve. This does not ensure that the right person is doing the right things, nor does it produce serving groups that have the right foundation for continued growth of the church. However, for a new church start, the senior pastor deemed this approach necessary to move ministry forward in the face of uncertainty.

The congregational context is a five-year-old new church plant that has changed worship locations three times in the history of the church. Each time that there was a geographical shift, there was also a membership shift that affected the pool of human resources available to support ministry mission and vision. The last move was deemed a permanent move, since the church now owns a building and land, which it acquired free

of charge from a declining congregation. Thus, the church has been in their permanent location for three years and has become a more defined fixture in the community.

This has made the need for leadership alignment to be even more critical as they continue to serve congregation, community and meet determined needs. To be clear, leadership in this context is not just the pastor but also includes the diaconate, ministerial leaders (ordained clergy, licensed clergy, and ministers in training), and lay leaders (leaders who are not providentially called to preach or teach the gospel but lead groups of people in ministry). The Senior Pastor and Founder is known as the Founding Visionary of the church and serves the entire congregation.

The Executive Advisory Council consists of five people who have oversight of the executive functions of the church to include hiring, review and approval of policies and procedures, and higher dollar budget requests that concern the building, grounds of the church. This council (also called EAC) also receives and reviews bids for contracts. Deacons serve the congregational care needs of the church. Ministers are responsible for supporting the sacerdotal functions, provide general hospitality, as well as leadership of for some of the church ministries. There is a Stewardship Ministry that supports the financial and fiduciary responsibilities of the church and other lay leaders that serve various ministries of the church. All of these persons come with various levels of spiritual gifts, talents, experiences and temperaments, which are common among all churches.

Mismatched leadership in this context is the lack of leadership training that is available that will provide leaders with similar foundational tools. In addition to the need for leadership training, there is also a need for the appropriate accountability for leaders. Mismatch is not always about a person's ability or skill. Oftentimes, a mismatch is

related to the ability, availability, and attitude. Someone may have a strong gifting but a bad attitude that results in conflict and confusion among ministry members.

As aforementioned, leadership mismatch may also play out as an obvious difference between what is presented and preached by the pastor and the inner workings of the individual servant teams. For example, the pastor could preach on unity and embracing all people in God's family, while some ministries have become cliques. While some key leaders are consistent in attendance and serving, others do not take accountability for their actions.

Before detailing the lack of lay leadership training, it should be noted that The Light Community Church has provided training for those persons who have been "home-grown" in ministry, namely ministers and deacons who have been licensed and or ordained under the church covering. Two deacons have been ordained at the church. Their journey to ordination included fourteen months of training, which included monthly meetings, books to read, speakers who came in to facilitate learning, and papers that were written by deacons in training to ensure understanding of serving requirements. It also included a session of scenarios where those in training had to deal with "mock" membership concerns. The final test for our deacons was a service project, where they defined a need and created a way to meet the need. Once these objectives were met and the candidates completed their final interview, an ordination date was set for them. They were ordained in 2015.

Ministers are licensed after taking either classes through the church (taught by the pastor) or a combination of classes in the church and those offered through seminary. Not all of the ministers at The Light Community Church have been to seminary. However, the

two who have been licensed at the church are both seminary graduates. Earlier this year, two ministers were ordained to a higher level of service of Christian ministry after going through a year of training. This training included meeting with the Senior Pastor, the submission of paperwork to explain theological and ethical views related to current events, and a formal catechism where each candidate was examined on his or her beliefs. Of the three that started the process, two were ordained earlier in 2016.

The primary problem with leadership mismatch falls within the remainder of the servant leaders, who were not required to go through any particular training to determine ministry match and alignment. So instead of having a “TLCC” way of doing things, each leader is coming up with their own way to satisfy general ministry goals and objectives. As a result, church members primarily and visitors secondarily will see inconsistency in ministry service. While this is certainly not a new issue in established churches, it is one that should be addressed early for this new church start. Otherwise strange fruit will appear that is not congruent with the vision and mission of the church.

According to John Maxwell, leadership guru “Everything rises and falls with leadership.”¹ Servant leaders must think differently, and embrace the ministry philosophy of the visionary in order to properly support the church’s mission and vision. This will also help to ensure sustainability for the church over time.

The topic of leadership is too vast to research in general. Therefore, this chapter will begin with a detailed description of the Enlightenment period and related religious themes. This is important since this was the time when people began to challenge the status quo and redefine theology and epistemology. They began to think differently about

¹ John Maxwell, “Meet John,” The John Maxwell Company, accessed July 27, 2016, <http://www.johnmaxwell.com/about/meet-john>.

their identity and how they would impact their environment. The philosophy of the Enlightenment period changed the way that leaders led.

Since the pastor of The Light Community church is female, one female will be highlighted in the research since females were not an integral part of the movement in a patriarchal society. Even now, female pastoral leadership is seen as an exception instead of normative. In addition to female involvement, key contributions of African Americans will be included which will again connect to the cultural context.

After exploring the Enlightenment period and some of the key leaders and leadership movements that relate to the context of the writer, we will move into the leadership shifts within the Post-Modern era. To extrapolate specific points from the history, the chapter will include some comparisons and contrasts throughout between the historical context reviews and the current leadership challenges within The Light Community Church context. It will conclude with a summary that will further lead us toward a doctoral project.

The Enlightenment Period

European politics, philosophy, science, religion and communications were radically reoriented between 1685 and 1815 as part of a movement referred to as the “Age of Reason,” or simply the Enlightenment. It refers to a time of an intellectual movement. Enlightenment thinkers in Britain, France and throughout Europe questioned traditional authority and embraced the notion that humanity could be improved through rational change. The Enlightenment produced numerous books, essays, inventions,

scientific discoveries, laws, wars and revolutions. The Enlightenment ultimately led to nineteenth-century Romanticism.²

The Enlightenment advocated reason as a means toward authority. Enlightenment thinkers argued that reason could free humans from religious authoritarianism that had brought so much destruction and death to people in religious wars. With the wide production of encyclopedias, knowledge was more easily accessible.³ The belief was that this information and other writings should be used to reach sensible conclusions about purpose and power.

It is important to note that there was no single, unified Enlightenment. Therefore, individual Enlightenment thinkers often had very different approaches. However, their differences and disagreements emerged out of some common Enlightenment themes. These themes related to the notion of rational questioning and the belief that progress could be made through dialogue.⁴ This is similar to the current context of The Light Community Church because there are currently no single unified leadership processes or protocol for lay leadership training. In addition, the church pastor of The Light Community Church stresses the need to have proactive thinkers as preferred leaders of the church. In that regard, there is the expectation that acts of reason will accompany theological motivation.

² "Enlightenment: Facts and Summary," History.com, accessed July 26, 2016, <http://www.history.com/topics/enlightenment>.

³ "Age of Enlightenment," New World Encyclopedia, accessed August 15, 2016, [http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Age of Enlightenment](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Age_of_Enlightenment).

⁴ "Enlightenment: Facts and Summary," History.com, accessed July 26, 2016, <http://www.history.com/topics/enlightenment>.

The Enlightenment themes of rational questioning and progressive dialogue also relates to a leadership philosophy within The Light Community Church. In the current ministry context, this is normally called employing “shared wisdom” to reach the most feasible path to a desired end result. It is often found that many people come to the table within the ministry context without enough experience to have positive contributions to ministry discussions and plans.

Christianity was affected during the Enlightenment period because it challenged people to think beyond the biblical text. Two key schools of thought as related to Christianity were rational supernaturalism and deism. Rational supernaturalism asserted that revelation could still be defended by reason. John Locke was one who affirmed this theory. In his book *The Reasonableness of Christianity as Delivered in the Scriptures*, Locke argued that the miracles recorded in the Bible can describe miracles but human reason has the authority to explain and accept them.⁵

Deism is a school of thought more radical than supernaturalism. It totally denied the necessity of revelation. Deism asserts that after God created the universe, there was no need to interfere with day-to-day operations. Deists included John Toland, and Voltaire.⁶ Deism is the belief that God exists but that the universe proceeds according to natural law. To a deist, there is a denial that supernatural occurrences exist and that God can be known through reason and nature instead of divine revelation.⁷

⁵ John Locke, *The Reasonableness of Christianity as Delivered in the Scriptures* (Ann Arbor, MI: Text Creation Partnership, 1895).

⁶ “Age of Enlightenment,” New World Encyclopedia, accessed August 15, 2016, [http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Age of Enlightenment](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Age_of_Enlightenment).

⁷ Nate Sullivan, “Major Themes of the Enlightenment,” accessed July 10, 2016, <http://study.com/academy/lesson/major-themes-of-the-enlightenment-reason-individualism-skepticism.html>.

There were two other religious themes that accompanied the Enlightenment period: Skepticism and Individualism. Enlightenment thinkers were skeptical of the institutionalized church and government authority. They rejected the notion of blind faith and wanted proof in order to make sense of what was happening. A famous quote to support this notion came from Rene Descartes who said: "I think; therefore, I am."⁸ This quote came as a result of his search for proof of his own existence.

Individualism is the idea that human beings have been given certain liberties and rights that are granted by God and or nature. This is what allowed them to fight for equal rights before there was an official Civil Rights Movement. Although Enlightenment thinkers were often members of the upper class, their belief in these unalienable rights make them sympathetic towards those in lower classes and gave them the motivation to fight for them.⁹

The years of 1730 through 1780 was a time of religious and anti-religious innovation as Christians repositioned their faith in a more rational way. They argued that the universe determined its own course without God's intervention. This brought out some secret groups such as the Freemasons and the Bavarian Illuminati. They also began to establish new places and venues to circulate ideas such as coffeehouses and newspapers. The French Revolution of 1789 was the culmination of this era and led people to bloody terror and the rise of Napoleon. Enlightened rationality not only led to

⁸ "Becoming the Father of Modern Philosophy," Biography, accessed November 15, 2016, <http://www.biography.com/people/ren-descartes-37613#becoming-the-father-of-modern-philosophy>.

⁹ Sullivan, "Major Themes of the Enlightenment," accessed July 10, 2016, <http://study.com/academy/lesson/major-themes-of-the-enlightenment-reason-individualism-skepticism.html>.

the era of Romanticism but also nineteenth century Liberalism and Classicism, along with the twentieth century Modernism.¹⁰

Freemasons are still an integral part of church leadership in today's culture and often a subject of debate. Also still debated is the possible trickle-down affect of the Illuminati in today's culture. Young people have often ascribed the Illuminati beliefs to pop culture entertainers like Jay Zee, Beyonce, and Kanye West. These three pop artists exemplify and sometimes show evidence that their strength does not come from connections to God or the Divine, but instead through the power of individual reason and internal strength.

Enlightenment theories related to having new locations to gather and providing publications to spread new ideas is also still evident in the religious culture today. Churches are creating sacred space outside of the traditional church edifice as a way to indicate that church is not a building but are also connected to an internal religious belief. Many churches that are growing quickly utilize spaces such as coffeehouses to increase relational equity among members and community, using these common spaces to create and develop Disciples of Christ. To connect to the enlightenment theory of written publications to collect and spread new ideas, church are also constantly thinking of new ways to collect and distribute the good news of Jesus Christ. This includes technology combined with more traditional publications.

Few women were among these Enlightenment era thinkers at this time. However during the late enlightenment stage between 1780 and 1815, Mary Wollstonecraft is noted as an early feminist involved in this movement. Mary Wollstonecraft was a

¹⁰ "Age of Enlightenment," New World Encyclopedia, accessed August 15, 2016, [http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Age of Enlightenment](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Age_of_Enlightenment).

remarkable woman. In her thinking she was ahead of her time to an extraordinary degree. She lived in the eighteenth century when women's lives were very restricted, but wrote in favor of women's rights. She advocated for boys and girls to be taught together in the same schools. She also believed in informal conversational methods of teaching, and lots of physical exercise. This was a hundred years before free, universal education was brought in, and long before informal child-centered approaches in teaching.

The structure of society favored men. Women had virtually no rights and were not allowed to vote. They were rarely given an opportunity to use their minds in professional, managerial, artistic or academic roles. Mary Wollstonecraft believed that society was wasting its assets because it kept women in the role of 'convenient domestic slaves,' and denied them economic independence. She demanded that women should be trained for professions and careers – in medicine (not just nursing), business, farming, and more. She said that this would free married women from 'the bitter bread of dependence' and would enable mothers and widows to live and manage their own affairs more rationally.

Two of her famous quotes are: "I do not wish them to have power over men, but over themselves," and "It is justice, not charity, that is wanting in this world."¹¹ There is another quote that is particularly interesting based on today's political climate and the onset of our first female Presidential candidate, Hillary R. Clinton. Wollstonecraft speaks of having relevant representatives for women in all areas of life with this: "Women ought to have representatives, instead of being arbitrarily governed without any direct share allowed them in the deliberations of government."¹² Her most famous book, *A*

¹¹ Gardner, *New International Encyclopedia*, 150.

¹² Jone Johnson Lewis, "Mary Wollstonecraft Quotes," About.com, last modified March 28, 2016, accessed July 29, 2016, womenshistory.about.com/od/quotes/wollstonecraft.htm.

Vindication of the Rights of Woman, was published in 1792. It is now honored as the first serious book to put forward feminist arguments.¹³

The book *Enlightenment and Social Progress* includes information about the education of black Americans in the late nineteenth century. Two accounts worth mentioning from this work is black leadership educated in the highest culture and the realization of man's inner nature.¹⁴ With regard to black leadership and the Enlightenment we find Booker T. Washington, who gained significant support with his plan for industrialized education. He had that in his favor but he was primarily silent about civil and political rights. He won the support of the slaves who had already tried to create industrial schools. He also won the support of those who would be threatened if African Americans had fought for equal voting rights. Therefore, he kept his focus on having blacks trained better to do what the "mainstream whites" would want them to do. It took him ten years but during that time, he was able to establish Tuskegee Institute. His goal was to bring education to the South.

He also was the subject of criticism for people who thought he should have been less submissive and more aggressive towards issues of equality. While his focus was on intellectual stability and strength, many who opposed Washington came from those who aligned themselves more with the leaders who were part of the revolts in 1750. The leaders of these types of revolts and revenge were Crispus Attacks, and Gabriel Prosser in Virginia (1800).¹⁵

¹³ "Mary Wollstonecraft," British Humanist Association, March 13, 2012, accessed July 27, 2016, <https://humanism.org.uk/humanism/the-humanist-tradition/enlightenment/mary-wollstonecraft/>.

¹⁴ J. J. Chambliss, *Enlightenment and Social Progress: Education in the Nineteenth Century* (Minneapolis, MN: Burgess Publishing, 1971).

¹⁵ Chambliss, *Enlightenment and Social Progress*.

One who opposed Booker T. Washington was another Enlightenment thinker name W.E.B. DuBois. He argued that the focus on industrial education was a type of surrender and would only make blacks more subservient and inferior. His idea was that Black people needed a higher level of education. Instead of surrendering and just making ourselves better to do the work that whites wanted blacks to do, DuBois believed that blacks should insist on the right to vote and civil equality. The meaning of higher education for DuBois was one that was not limited by the work of someone's labor or industrial skills. Rather, it was according to mental ability.¹⁶

In Northern states where blacks were free, a new type of self-development and self-identity was evident. In Philadelphia and New York, blacks started to move from white churches and started to assemble under the formation of African churches. They also tried to rename themselves and have others refer to them as freemen since slavery had only remained in the South by 1830. This was an attempt to assimilate with the name on the same terms as other men. They no longer wanted to associate with their Southern counterparts. They did not want to be called slaves or Negroes, but preferred to be called "people of color," especially with the rise of the mixed community, who were called mulattos. These preferences were not recognized in a general sense and such distinctions were only made on an occasional or exceptional basis.¹⁷ This led to self-assertion related to politics where Frederick Douglass was an integral part.

Frederick Froebel was one who believed that education was directly connected to God's divine order. He wrote about the education of man and shared that wisdom should

¹⁶ Chambliss, *Enlightenment and Social Progress*, 86.

¹⁷ Chambliss, *Enlightenment and Social Progress*, 92.

be the highest aim of man and the most exalted achievement of human beings. Froebel connects the education of a man to the very first man on earth. Through Adam education led to full consciousness, and is now a universal requirement in order to navigate successfully through life. Through education a man would find out how to be self-conscious and then would be able to freely follow the divine order and live a faithful, pure, and holy life that would please God.¹⁸

Enlightenment thinkers were considered liberals of their time. They supported equality and human dignity while at the same time opposed supernatural experiences, superstition, and bigotry. Scientific thinking overlaps with Enlightenment thinking because these folks utilized scientific methods to understand the world. Again, this challenged the status quo. Although the Enlightenment period started in Europe, it eventually spread to the United States and attracted historical figures like Thomas Jefferson.¹⁹

Postmodern Period Leadership

Leadership in the Postmodern age has changed significantly from the earlier days of Enlightenment. A rapid change with technology and innovation require less precision in leadership and takes away the need for the stringent hierarchical concept that was once the norm, according to Mitch McCrimmon, Ph.D. In his article, he argues that due to

¹⁸ Chambliss, *Enlightenment and Social Progress*, 107.

¹⁹ Sullivan, "Major Themes of the Enlightenment."

uncertainties in our society, we cannot have the same expectations of leadership to be successful in a top down approach.²⁰

As uncertainty arises, effective leaders will turn to the “wisdom of the crowd” for leadership. The power of knowledge is the room to address the situation at hand is not just in the hands of an individual sage but is fragmented among those who have wisdom and experience related to the problem that needs to be solved. When leadership emerges in a crowd, it is not about one person rising to the top but rather many voices trying to determine the best outcome. According to McCrimmon, this is postmodernism: no ultimate authorities, fragmentation, and having everyone’s voice is heard.

This concept shared by McCrimmon is comparable to the term called “shared wisdom.” This phrase is understood in the church as a verb; something to be done in order to bring closure or remedy to a resounding issue or concern at the church. The “shared wisdom” concept connects to the “wisdom of the crowd” of Postmodern leadership. However, the difficulty becomes the traditional understanding of the church congregation as it relates to pastoral leadership. If the congregation believes in a more traditional method of leadership, than the postmodern needs and thought process for leadership will not seem reasonable, will not be respected, and could possibly feel like a burden to those who are not used to being a part of the fragmented voices that are a part of the Postmodern solution.

McCrimmon continues to push the issue by stating that businesses actually defeat themselves by positioning leadership as a top down foster. This causes dependency on

²⁰ Mitch McCrimmon, "Leadership in a Postmodern Age Leadership," accessed August 9, 2016, <http://www.lead2xl.com/leadership-in-a-postmodern-age.html>.

one person and stifles the creative thinking of the general knowledge base. Therefore, businesses lose the power of the leadership minds at the bottom.

The purpose of leadership has evolved through phases. They are introduced as Model T and Model A phases, derived from Henry Ford's first two successful cars. These two models are considered to be the epitome of traditional model leadership. The breakdown is noted as the Model T- Individual in charge maximizes performance and gets work done through people. While the Model A- Individual in charge initiates and manages change.

The Modern Theory of leadership comes after these two models per McCorn. Similar to Enlightenment period, it involves changing the way that people think about leadership. In the Modern theory of leadership, the goal of the individual in charge facilitates new thinking. However, in the Postmodern model, leadership is in the hands of anyone who influences. This can be multiple, unexpected sources.²¹

Model T leadership began before 1970 when innovation was not popular. The purpose of leadership at this point was to motivate employees and coordinate their performance. The job of the leadership was to provide enough motivation to employees that they would produce at the most optimal levels. It was definitely a top down approach.

John Kotter was a key contributor to the Model A approach, which focused on initiating and managing change. The Japanese invasion starting in the late 1970s ushered the United States into an era of organizational change. The focus was on performance management. With both Model T and Model A approaches to leadership, the authority of

²¹ McCrimmon, "Leadership in a Postmodern Age," 2.

the person in charge was most important. Any sign of uncertainty of the leader was a sign of weakness or was even considered an absence of leadership.²²

Jim Collins is an example of a man who made a major leadership shift from the earlier traditional models. He faced the challenge of dealing with uncertainty in a leadership role. There is a certain amount of humility that must accompany the modern method of leadership because it meets the reality that one person does not know everything. Modern leaders understand that they cannot provide direction without getting input from other people. The modern method of leadership is able to connect the traditional forms of Model T and Model A since it still holds on to the notion that leadership means being in charge of a group.

Postmodern changes the leadership function from a top down, chief to a facilitator that negotiates the best opinions and thoughts of the chiefs. The essence of Postmodern leadership challenges the status quo in order to promote a better way of doing things. The leaders are a combination of people who influence decisions. Even those outside of an organization's normal structure provide leadership because they have the ability to influence the decision of those who have the wherewithal and resources to make changes.

An example shared in the McCorn article was a Sony employee who convinced his bosses to develop PlayStation. He had the courage to challenge the norm, which at the time was a company that did not make toys. The employee had enough influence on the situation that the company brand changed due to that one new product. Another example of influence outside of the normal structure of decision-making is Martin Luther King, Jr. He challenged segregation on buses and his leadership, albeit outside of the U.S.

²² McCrimmon, "Leadership in a Postmodern Age," 3.

government and Supreme Court, influenced their decision. In essence, in the Postmodern leadership approach, there is plenty of room for bottom-up influence, without reliance on one central person or central bases of wisdom. The bottom up leader can have impact on a senior executive team without being a member. That influence is informal but still imperative to the overall good of the organization.

There are six distinctive features of postmodern leadership according to McCorn research. Postmodern leadership can emerge from anywhere but is based on some form of knowledge or insight. It is a discrete act and does not have to include a formal title or role. Thirdly, leadership under a postmodern umbrella ends once followers act. So in essence, if the goal is for a new procedure to be developed, the project ends once the procedure is developed. The person did not have a new title or role to accomplish that task. Postmodern leadership does not manage people or decide for them. This goes with the premise that leadership is pure influence. With that said, influence can be shown by outsiders of the organization which cannot be managed by internal networks or traditional quantitative strategies. Fifthly, postmodern leadership can be shown by groups. An example is when a group goes somewhere first, it can influence other groups to follow or they can promote a better way to get there.

The final attribute of postmodern leadership is fluidity. In a knowledge driven world, there is no monopoly on ideas. Brainstorming sessions and having a plethora of ideas is celebrated in the postmodern culture. Therefore, even suggestions from a suggestion box can become a catalyst to shift the leadership direction. Thereby the shift and change in the way that the vision becomes reality would be embraced instead of discouraged. The Postmodern leadership model asserts that we cannot continue to be so

fixated on one person being in charge. However, that type of thinking is a huge mountain to climb especially in the church. The world has changed. Industrial era concepts of leadership worked well in a world that was static but it will not survive in our fast changing, complex era.²³

It is important to understand changes in leadership development that is necessary to facilitate the postindustrial, postmodern information age. Per a study by H. Skipton Leonard it was determined that the requirements for leadership selection and development have changed significantly over the past several decades.²⁴ Not only is the basic model for Postmodern leadership different that prior years but the selection process for leadership is different as well. In this age of technology and change, more training is necessary to ensure that people have the right skill set to support the postmodern leadership shifts. Many of these skill sets are not hard skills, but soft skills that allow more flexibility to promote the fluidity that is needed for Postmodern leadership to be successful.

This approach to selecting and developing future leaders is a shift from traditional practices when hierarchical and bureaucratic organizations were the status quo. The status quo included a leadership style where status, authority, and skills could be used to complete assignments and gain cooperation.

In the Postmodern context potential supervisors and managers are enrolled in management training, leadership development and coaching programs in order to

²³ McCrimmon, "Leadership in Postmodern Age," 7.

²⁴ H. Skipton Leonard, "Leadership Development for the Postindustrial, Postmodern Information Age," *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research* 55, no. 1 (December 2003): 3, doi:10.1037/1061-4087.55.1.3.

improve on the people management and leadership skills that are necessary. Earlier definitions of leadership emphasized the ability to induce compliance or the ability to influence.²⁵ These definitions no longer have the same appeal in contemporary culture. Definitions that seem to work best per Leonard research include the impact of leadership on accomplishing a mission. In 2000, Colin Powell provided a simple definition that meets this need. Powell says that leadership is the ability to motivate and inspire people to accomplish a certain mission.²⁶ This definition does not include the process by which to meet the mission, but clarifies the goal for leadership. Therefore, this definition could still be supported by Postmodern leadership methods, which include multiple centers of wisdom.

Earlier literature on leadership, prior to the 1950s focused on three factors: competencies, personal traits, and the situations that required leadership. By 1950 it became clear that these traits alone were not enough to reliably predict who would become leaders. As a result companies and organizations have moved to the review of behavioral leadership competencies. It is easier to evaluate and track what leaders actually do than their traits. What they do is something that can be observed, while traits are something that could have been inherited or even underutilized in the work place or wherever action needs to be taken.

This Postmodern leadership shift has affected the business world, namely in Human Resources. Potential employees for companies are tested on skills prior to being hired. In addition, the interview process now includes more open-ended behavioral

²⁵ E. L. Munson, *The Management of Men* (New York, NY: Holt, 1921).

²⁶ Leonard, "Leadership Development," 5.

questions to allow the applicant to share specific experiences where desired traits and skills were utilized. In a behavioral interview, it is more difficult to give responses that are untrue to the character of the person.²⁷ This decreases the risk that a candidate would be able to misrepresent their qualifications or provide answers that seem right to the potential employer.

Summary

Through review of the Enlightenment period and key schools of thought along with relevant things and historical figures of the Postmodern era of leadership, there are some similarities and contrasts that relate to the leadership misalignment issue. The chief visionary leader of The Light Community Church has a postmodern approach of leadership and the majority of people on the leadership team, i.e. those expected to lead the people into a better relationship with Christ, have a more traditional way of thinking.

Similar to the Enlightenment school of thought, Postmodern leadership believes that there is room for educational support in religious settings. Our black leaders who transitioned from focusing on industrial education only to providing education that would lead people to a higher level of purpose and productivity have laid the foundation for churches in our current culture. Churches should be equipping leaders who equip leaders, not from a top down approach from the traditional and tribal context, but from the use of any relevant influences that come along to make the church better to carry out its missional purpose.

²⁷ Katharine Hanson, "Behavioral Job Interviewing Strategies for Job-Seekers," Quintessential, accessed August 20, 2016, <https://www.livecareer.com/quintessential/behavioral-interviewing>.

Just as training and work education moved from industrial education to another type of higher education, the church must also make that shift. Industrialized education was frowned upon by many new age thinkers during that era because it only taught blacks how to do what whites wanted them to do in a better way. This, in the mind of many was still a sense of slavery thinking and training. Industrialized education did not challenge the status quo, which kept those in charge happy.

In churches, industrialized education could be compared to a training program that would for example, only teach an usher how to serve as an usher without supplying the spiritual equipping for how to apply hospitality principles and scriptural support to his or her own life. We must move away from just having enough training and discipleship to make a person fit for church work inside four walls of an edifice, but instead move towards a holistic approach to connect with the higher learning principles taught and initiated by W.E.B. DuBois. In the church culture, that level of training would include the development of the spiritual nature of a person that moves beyond just “church work.” Unless we will have a group of people who know how to serve in church functions but are not successfully leading Christian lives.

The Postmodern model asserts that even persons outside of the core leadership team can influence results. This is why a member who sits on a pew can have influence on how the worship flows. If they voice their opinion to someone who is a part of the “known” decision makers, that opinion should be just as credible as those entered on an online survey or church suggestion box. Therefore, we can utilize a bottom-up approach in order to reach people and invite them into a richer relationship with Christ.

The Enlightenment thinking era is similar to the Postmodern leadership era in that there was no one place that all ideas flowed. In the Age of Reason, different ideas were explored, collected, and distributed using new methods. In the Postmodern leadership model, it is understood that the central area of ideas, insight and authority cannot come from one person at the top but is shared among those who have wisdom and knowledge about the condition or problem at hand that needs to be solved.

The Senior Pastor at The Light Community Church often uses the term “shared wisdom” in meetings to emphasize that there is a common goal but a variety of ways to reach the goal. Shared wisdom implies that those who sit at the table are coming with experiences, knowledge and various skills that are important to the process of problem solving and discipleship building. As noted before, many people are still not used to this approach in a church context.

Also important is the comparison between the selection and training of leadership and management in the postmodern era. In the early years of the church, the “whosoever will” approach to leadership and servant selection caused us to operate in traditional ways, where the top leader was responsible for motivating and influencing others for the best possible outcome. This, along with the lack of purposeful training for new members or intentional training for most leadership and those serving in ministry resulted in a lack of sustainable investment.

Instead of just determining leadership potential based on skills and traditional means, we are moving to a more behavioral approach. This puts the focus on what a person has done as opposed to what they say they will do. This will require the church to use more time to see the person’s commitment to the church’s mission and vision prior to

connecting them with serving opportunities or leadership roles. In addition, it will be important for The Light Community Church to continue its quest to add more requirements and training to those who are interested and requested to lead ministry. These requirements will establish the foundation for determining what they do instead of what they say they know.

In order for The Light Community Church to avoid misalignment in leadership, it must teach the importance of God's revelation knowledge, biblical foundation and the importance of being empowered by human reason (common sense) in order to lead people into deeper relationship with Christ. It must also assert the Postmodern approach that influence comes from all directions and that a closed-minded approach will destroy our goal toward achieving our mission which is to impact lives with the love and light of Christ. Until the leadership team collectively comes into agreement that all voices, gifts, and abilities matter and that service does require intentional training and preparation then misalignment, disenchantment of membership, and subpar completion of the church mission will continue to be a problem.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Leadership alignment is necessary for the church to properly execute its mission and vision while impacting the contextual community. To build leadership alignment is more than just grouping random people together for the sake of doing kingdom work. Instead there must be some intentionality on the selection of church leadership, along with quality time that is spent with the visionary leader and lay leaders of the church. With selecting the right individuals to lead ministries, coupled with a shared understanding of the church vision and mission through the lens of the visionary leader, there will be shared accountability and significant impact.

God is intentional in creating divine connections to advance the kingdom here on earth. In review of the scriptures, God is not in the business of putting people together who have the same personality, disposition, socioeconomic status, character or background. To the contrary, God often puts diverse people together for the purpose of moving ministry forward. One clear example is Jesus and the disciples, of whom eleven became apostles that led others in the way.

The Old Testament scripture was selected of Elijah being sent on an assignment by God to find Elisha. This connection seems to have been for more than ministry. Elijah met Elisha at a time shortly after a bout of depression and loneliness so there is some

sense that Elisha supported the need for relational equity in ministry. Of course, Elisha was the one who continued in prophetic ministry after Elijah was gone.

In between the mandate of God, Elijah being obedient to God, and Elijah leaving earth from ministry, Elijah and Elisha spent time together. This relational equity ensured leadership alignment. To be clear, these two-people carried out a prophetic role and were not known to have disciples or followers in particular, but they were required to share the relevant news of God. This role is still relevant for prophetic pastors of today. God will also guide pastors to select lay leaders that will provide relational and spiritual support for the church body. The mission and vision of the church will move forward and become sustainable when the leadership team, even in its diversity, is aligned, empowered, and equipped to move ministry forward.

The New Testament text describes the first church in Acts, which began with apostles who had walked with Jesus, save the one who replaced Judas. These twelve were the first set of leaders who aligned themselves to the mission and vision of Christ to make a significant impact after Jesus resurrection. Through their work and witness the community was supported. When the community was supported more people were added to the Christian movement.

Leadership alignment allows for individual differences, while still connecting the core values of the lead team. In turn, they can accomplish the mission and impact the community. To further develop the theological foundation work that this project necessitates, we will explore various systematic theologies. In particular, liberation theology, black theology, and womanist theology. To explore the role of the church in

community and relate it further to leadership alignment, the Christian theology of ecclesiology will also be included in this chapter.

A newly researched theology called the theology of work will be mentioned to define the function and heart of prophetic pastors in community churches. It is believed that the theology of work also supports the theological construct of many Old Testament prophets. These theologies connect to the anticipated project, the personhood of the pastor, and the context in which ministry needs to impact the community. The relevance of this for effective ministry in this age will be further defined in the conclusion of this chapter.

Theology of Work

The theology of work comes from a special project of biblical scholars. In researching the nature and function of God, they have related that nature and function to people who are in the working-class community. It should be noted that many church leaders serve the church while working secular jobs. Oftentimes churches are not able to hire the staff that is needed on a full-time basis because of church budgets and financial restraints. Therefore, pastors who want to build leadership alignment will have to contend with the schedules, and demands of the secular jobs of each leader, along with a host of other personal priorities. To understand the theology of work is to relate to the people in pews and on pastoral teams. It also supports the need for the community to be empowered and liberated by putting a priority on doing the assigned and ordained work of God.

By review of the theological statement, the foundational premise for the project group is noted below:

Our theology of work is developed in the light of a biblical understanding of the work of God, the Holy Trinity of the Father, the almighty maker of heaven and earth; our Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, who came down from heaven for our salvation; and the Holy Spirit, the giver of life:

- Creating and sustaining all that is and commissioning humans, made in the image of God, to care for, cultivate and rule over creation through their work.
- Redeeming humanity and the rest of creation, including the world of work, from sin and its destructive consequences through the work of the incarnate Son's life, death and resurrection.
- Bringing all things on earth and in heaven together as one redeemed and transformed new creation in Christ.

This understanding of God's work (both what God does and how God does it) has led us to explore the meaning of human work in the light of four major themes: Creation, the Fall, Redemption, and New Creation.¹

In the Theology of Work Project, contributors discuss the importance of the Old Testament prophets and their contributions to the work of ordinary citizens. Elisha is named in particular as one who was concerned about the work and welfare of people in the community. These people were often impoverished and struggling against the rules of the king, which did not have the lower class in mind. Contributors of this project are Jill Baker, Brian Houseman and Alice Mathews who share the following insights concerning the theology of work:

As the northern kings slide deeper into apostasy and tyranny, God raises up prophets to oppose them more forcefully than ever. Prophets were figures of immense God-given power coming out of nowhere to speak God's truth in the halls of human power. Elijah and Elisha are by far the most prominent prophets in the books of Kings and Chronicles, and of the two, Elisha is especially notable for the attention he pays to the work of ordinary Israelites. Elisha is called to stand against Israel's rebellious kings throughout a long career (2 Kings 2:13 - 13:20). His actions show that he regards the people's economic life to be as important as

¹ "Theological Foundations," Theology of Work, accessed January 9, 2017, <https://www.theologyofwork.org/about/foundations/>.

the kingdom's dynastic struggles, and he tries to protect the people from the disasters brought on by the kings.²

Elisha often worked with people who had economic challenges as well as those who did not have the support of the local government. Through the power of God and his calling as a prophet, Elisha restored a city's irrigation system to cleanse a polluted well in Jericho (2 Kgs. 2:19-20), restored the hope and financial health of a family (2 Kgs. 4:1-7), restored the health of a military commander (2 Kgs. 5:1-14), and restored the ax of a lumberjack (2 Kgs. 6:1-7). The theology of work is concerned about the working-class person and is important to the context of prophets because many of them were called while they were working in a lower-class positions.

Alice Matthews further explains this connection between prophets and the working-class people as a contributing author in the Theology of Work Project. She shares that in most cases, the prophets were not what we would consider professionals in ministry since they did not earn a living from their prophetic activities. God tapped them for special duty while in the midst of other professions. Some prophets (e.g., Jeremiah and Ezekiel) were priests with the duties described above. Others were shepherds, including Moses and Amos. Deborah was a judge adjudicating issues for the Israelites. The task of a prophet overlaid other jobs.³ When looking to align leadership for sustainable ministry the theology of work should be considered since work life is a part

² "The Prophet Elisha's Attention to Ordinary Work (2 Kings 2-6)," Theology of Work, accessed January 8, 2017, <https://www.theologyofwork.org/old-testament/samuel-kings-chronicles-and-work/from-failed-monarchies-to-exile-1-kings-11-2-kings-25-2-chronicles-10-36/the-prophet-elishas-attention-to-ordinary-work-2-kings-2-6/>.

³ Alice Matthews, "Introduction to the Prophets," December 9, 2010, accessed on January 8, 2017, <https://www.theologyofwork.org/old-testament/introduction-to-the-prophets/>.

of church life, not just for those with titles and positions, but also those who need to be impacted in the church pews and community at large.

Liberation Theology

Liberation theology deals with any theological movement that puts emphasis on the liberating impact of the gospel. In practice, it refers in particular to the movement that developed in Latin America in the late nineteen sixties and stressed the role of political action and being liberated from poverty and oppression. The basic themes of liberation theology in the Latin Community as addressed in the book by Alister McGrath are as follows:

- 1) The focus is on the poor and oppressed - The church is on the side of the poor.
- 2) Involves critical reflection in practice - Theology should not be detached from political action or social involvement. True knowledge of God can never be disinterested or detached, but comes through to a commitment to the poor. This theme is in contrast to the Enlightenment thinkers who believed that commitment is a barrier to knowledge.⁴

Black Theology/Black Liberation Theology

Black theology is the theology of black liberation. It was especially significant in the United States during the 1960's and 1970's and concerned itself with ensuring that the realities of black life was represented theologically. It has a foundational premise that Jesus died for everyone to become free and that God desires to emancipate black people from all kinds of humanitarian challenges to include racism and classism.⁵ The most

⁴ Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, 3rd ed. (Maiden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 115-116.

⁵ McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 117.

significant writer within this movement is generally agreed to be James H. Cone who wrote *Black Theology of Liberation* in 1970. He argues in this book that “God was Black” and identified with the oppressed.⁶ The writer does not agree that God has a particular race but ascribes to the identification of the oppressed, regardless of race.

Dwight Hopkins, professor of theology at the University of Chicago, Divinity School, describes black theology as a prophetic theology of liberation. Specifically for African Americans, to be a Christian is to identify with the freedom stories in Exodus. The African American church should work to build God’s new commonwealth for the poor. The poor, in Hopkins book *Black Theology of Liberation*, are described as people who are both materially and spiritual poor.⁷ This expands the traditional definition from socioeconomic to spiritual development and maturation.

This hope of liberation is offered to blacks in the United States and to people of African descent in other countries as well. Hopkins asserts:

If the majority of the people in the world who are materially and spiritually oppressed are also free, then this offers hope to remove the unjust power of the minority groups which control most of the world’s resources. Removing the internal and external demons keeping the majority of the world population in slavery will help change the structural system of global monopolization by a few. By following the liberation stories in the Bible, the prophetic stand of black theology, and the radical tradition of black church leadership, the African American church has more of a possibility to make a contribution to the practice of freedom for all humanity across the world.⁸

Two developments kicked off the study of black liberation theology. One was the 1966 statement in the *New York Times* by the National Committee of Negro Churchmen and

⁶ James H. Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation* (Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott, 1970).

⁷ Dwight N. Hopkins, *Introducing Black Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999), 6.

⁸ Hopkins, *Introducing Black Theology*, 7.

the second was the publication of James H. Cone called *Black Theology and Black Power*, which was published in the spring of 1969.⁹ These publications started a shift in theological studies and in the contemporary period of African American scholarship. The seeds of this movement grew more interest in issues related to African Americans, but it also grew some critics.

Womanist Theology and Liberation

One critic of black liberation theology was Jacqueline Grant, a systemic theologian who eventually became a champion for womanist theology. She accused black theologians of not including African American women. In her opinion, black theology was raising the banner of liberation while ignoring the fact that black women were still suffering from gender discrimination. She believed that with women being absent from the writings of black liberation theologians that men were only talking about themselves.

In line with Grant's critique, other womanist theologians have asserted their right to think theologically and find their place in the biblical texts. In contrast to male writers, the female writers have concluded black liberation theology must include women in order to accurately depict the depth of God's love for the disenfranchised and overlooked sector of society. After all the issues, concerns and struggles of black women, they were seldom discussed and certainly not addressed, even in the church. Womanist theologians consistently hold together the issues of gender, race, class and sexual orientation. They differ from white feminists and black male theologians in that their theological norm is

⁹ James Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997).

how the spirit of liberation shows itself in all of the parts of black women's and the whole African American community's experience.¹⁰

One particular womanist scholar, Delores Williams explored the biblical account of Hagar, a black slave owned by Sarah, as her basis for the promise of freedom in the word of God. Hagar followed the instruction of her owner, slept with her husband, conceived and gave birth to a son and then was hated by the very person who gave her permission. In spite of the oppression and being cast away, God still provided for her and her child. In her writing, *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-Talk*, Williams admits in the preface of the book that she was challenged by her theological professor to find something that her male counterparts had not included in their writings.¹¹ This challenge led her to be a part of a movement of womanist theological scholars.

A more contemporary voice in womanist theology is Linda E. Thomas, an Assistant Professor of Theology and Anthropology at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. Thomas describes womanist theology as a critical reflection on the black women's place in the world that God has created and takes seriously black women's experience as human beings who are made in the image of God. The categories of life that black women deal with daily such as race, womanhood, and political economy are carefully woven into the religious space that African American women occupy. Womanist theology affirms and critiques the positive and negative attributes of the church, the African American community, and the larger society. In her assessment, the

¹⁰ Hopkins, *Introducing Black Theology of Liberation*, 87-89.

¹¹ Delores Williams, *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God Talk* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993), 2013.

primary goal of womanist theology is to interrogate the social construction of black womanhood in relation to the African American community.

Thomas graciously shares a roll call of more contemporary figures of womanist theology and the roles that they play in church, community and home. Some of these names have already been mentioned in this chapter, which emphasizes their importance in the theological hall of fame:

Names associated with the emergence of womanist theology in the U.S.A. are Katie Cannon, Emilie Townes, Jacqueline Grant, Delores Williams, Cheryl Townsend Gilkes, Kelly Brown Douglas, Renita Weems, Shawn Copeland, Clarice Martin, Francis Wood, Karen Baker-Fletcher, Jamie Phelps, Marcia Riggs, and Cheryl Kirk-Duggan. We are university, seminary, and divinity school professors. We are ordained and lay women in all the Christian denominations. Some of us are full-time pastors; some are both pastor and professor. We are preachers and prayer warriors. We are mothers, partners, lovers, wives, sisters, daughters, aunts, nieces -- and we comprise two-thirds of the black church in America. We are the black church. The church would be bankrupt without us and the church would shut down without us. We are from working-class as well as middle-class backgrounds. We are charcoal black to high yellow women. We love our bodies; we touch our bodies; we like to be touched; we claim our created beauty. And we know that what our minds forget our bodies remember. The body is central to our being. The history of the African American ordeal of pain and pleasure is inscribed in our bodies.¹²

Her article also brings in the job description of any black woman who would be joining the movement of contemporary womanist theologians. She encourages those black females who are currently leading congregations or contributing to the development of disciples of today. Giving the ideal description of a relevant womanist religious scholar, Thomas describes them as an “indigenous anthropologist” who reflects critically upon

¹² Linda E. Thomas, “Womanist Theology, Epistemology, and a New Anthropological Paradigm,” accessed January 10, 2017, <http://www.crosscurrents.org/thomas.htm>.

her own community of origin and brings sensitivity to the political, economic, and cultural systems which impact poor and working class black women being studied.¹³

The writer believes that liberation theology connects in some ways with the historical period of Enlightenment thought. Although the Enlightenment thinkers relied too heavily on reason and disregarded the notion of miracles, the connection comes from the idea that to begin liberation as it relates to the word of God, one must be open minded and be able to reason that the Bible is not relegated to just those that it was written for in history but can be applied to any plight or disparaging situation that a person may find themselves.

Education and reason did not make African Americans free in the natural sense, but it expanded and elevated minds beyond what slave owners and agents of oppression would have desired for them. As noted by Gayraud Wilmore, learning to read and write was the first rung on the ladder leading to liberation. A slave who could read realized that there was more to read and understand than the Bible. This new information opened up a whole new world and along with it came a new self-esteem, and a new consciousness of identity and destiny.¹⁴

Wilmore's writing introduces the concept of elevationism, which is another subset of liberation theology. Church leaders should seek to elevate the existence of each person in the church in community by demonstrating God's power to raise us from our human expectation and societal norms, to the possibilities of God's liberating power. Some of

¹³ Thomas, "Womanist Theology," accessed January 10, 2017, <http://www.crosscurrents.org/thomas.htm>.

¹⁴ Gayraud S. Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism: An Interpretation of the Religious History of African Americans* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998), 264.

the chief champions for the doctrine of racial elevation were black women. They were concerned about the stability of the family, the education of children and the cultivation of Christian morality. In the long list of these elevation womanist theologians are Amanda Berry Smith, Maria Stewart, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, Fannie Barrier Williams, Lucy Craft Laney, and Nannie H. Burroughs and of course, Delores Williams who was previously mentioned in this chapter.¹⁵

Ecclesiology

In dealing with leadership alignment in the church, we must look at the theological function of the church. Ecclesiology is the Christian theology of the church. It was not an issue of the early church. Isidore of Pelusium defined the church as “the assembly of saints joined together by correct faith and an excellent manner of life.” These were the three key elements of church at the time.¹⁶

- The church is a spiritual society, which replaces Israel as the people of God in the world.
- All Christians are made one in Christ, despite their differences.
- The church is the repository of true Christian teaching.
- The church gathers the faithful throughout the world together, in order to enable them to grow in faith and holiness.

In the twentieth century, some new theological themes were presented that intersected Christology and ecclesiology. First, Christ is present in the church through church

¹⁵ Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism*, 264.

¹⁶ McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, 476.

sacraments. Originally, the Catholic Church asserted that the church was a sacrament. Meaning, the church itself is a sign and instrument of communion with God and unity among all human beings. This is one of the most distinctive contributions of the Catholic Church to ecclesiology. Secondly, Christ is present through the word. This was a central theme of Protestant understanding. To them, the presence of Christ resulted from the proclamation of his word, in preaching and with sacraments. Consider the statement of John Calvin about the nature of the church:

Wherever we see the Word of God purely preached and listened to, and the sacraments administered according to Christ's institution, it is in no way to be doubted that a church of God exists. If the ministry has the Word and honors it, if it has the administration of the sacraments, it deserves without doubt to be held and considered a church.¹⁷

For Calvin, preaching of the word and right administration of the sacraments are linked with the presence of Christ. This kerygmatic theme continues to be of major importance in the twentieth century, in particular to Karl Barth. Karl Barth believed that the church is the community that comes into being in response to the preached word of God. Thus, Barth's ecclesiology involves the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. For Barth the church is not an extension of Christ, but is united with Christ and called and commissioned by Christ to serve the world. Christ is present with the church, through the Holy Spirit.¹⁸ This leads us to the third theme of Twentieth Century ecclesiology: Christ is present through the Holy Spirit.¹⁹

¹⁷ McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, 490.

¹⁸ McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, 489.

¹⁹ McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, 490.

There are some critiques of some of the current models of the church. These critiques are informed by the New Testament images of the church. These images deal with theological models. The most influential model is that it functions as an institution of salvation. It defines the church in terms of its structure with officers, procedures, and traditions. The chain of power and authority is precisely determined. While institutional structure belongs in the church, the critique is that it has done more harm than good. Particularly, because power flows from the top to the bottom and the power is centralized in the few hands of those who are supposedly ordained by God. These few rule over the silent and powerless masses of Believers.²⁰

Interesting enough, the strongest criticism of the over-institutionalized church comes today from Latin American liberation theology. We cannot truly understand this theology unless we recognize that critique of a hierarchical, over-centralized, institutionalized church. Leonardo Boff compares the institutionalized church to a business enterprise with the elite in charge of the capital and the masses reduced to consumers.²¹

Another model of ecclesiology is an intimate community of the Spirit. According to this view, the church is not a formal organization but instead a tightly knit group of people who share a common image of the reviving Spirit of God. The principal task of the church becomes facilitating spiritual experiences. The second task would be the promotion of interpersonal relationship. Protestantism has produced a variety of understanding of the church as spiritual community. One appears in the charismatic

²⁰ Daniel L. Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991), 193.

²¹ Leonardo Boff, *The Church: Charism and Power* (New York, NY: Crossroad, 1985), 43.

movement that emphasized the gifts of the Spirit and special experiences for spiritual renewal. People who have these experiences often form close, mutually supportive groups.

Further noted, this model of intimate community of the Spirit addresses real human needs. This is of particular importance to a community church where so many needs come to the forefront. Many people in modern society are desperately lonely and scarred from circumstances of life.

Some come into churches physically broken by their efforts to survive in a depersonalized and indifferent social order. They come to our churches looking for a safe refuge where they can experience something deeper from a higher authority. The church that focuses on being an intimate community of faith will focus on prayer, meditation and sharing experiences. As a result, it will cultivate more relationships than the institutionalized model of church life. The weakness of this model is that it becomes a spiritual escape for people who need to change their lives in order to deal with a corrupt society.²² Thus the experience of receiving regular escapes does not equip the believer theologically for life application. Living abundantly will require more than just spiritual encounters; it will require spiritual discipline in action.

We should not leave the topic of ecclesiology without exploring the groundbreaking work of Avery Cardinal Dulles, who wrote *Models of the Church*, which was originally published in 1974 and subsequently was reprinted in 2002 with an additional chapter for a new model. Dulles has carefully studied the writings of contemporary Protestant and Catholic ecclesiologists and sifted out six major approaches,

²² Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding*, 194.

or "models," through which the church's character can be understood: as Institution, Mystical Communion, Sacrament, Herald, Servant. He added a new theological model at a later time called Community of Disciples, which is a combination of the previous five models. A balanced theology, he concludes, must incorporate the major affirmations of each. "The method of models or types," observes Cardinal Dulles, "can have great value in helping people to get beyond the limitations of their own particular outlook and to enter into fruitful conversation with others."²³

The ecclesiastical model of a Community of Disciples fits well into a New Testament tradition church in contemporary society. It is derived from the notion that there is not one model or one theology that can be held in an effective, functional church. After Jesus' resurrection, there was a new community of disciples that were empowered by the Holy Spirit to continue the work that Jesus began. Well grounded in the Gospels, this model relies also on the post-Easter concept of discipleship as inclusive of the whole Christian life. Christian catechesis, ministry, and sacraments are all understood as methods to foster discipleship, which also demands missionary activity for its completion. The discipleship model is appropriate in an age of dechristianization, when the church must necessarily assume the form of a contrast society.²⁴ In other words, the church of today deals with many of the same issues those disciples faced after Jesus was resurrected. Our world is less influenced by Christian thought and practice. Therefore,

²³ Avery Cardinal Dulles, *Models of the Church* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2002), 5.

²⁴ Avery Cardinal Dulles, "Community of Disciples as a Model of Church," *Philosophy and Theology* 1, no. 2 (Winter 1986): 99-120, accessed January 9, 2017, https://www.pdcnet.org/pdc/bvdb.nsf/purchase?openform&fp=philtheol&id=philtheol_1986_0001_0002_0099_0120.

current day disciples of Christ still represent people who live in the world but we are not of the world, which Dulles calls a contrast society.

Churches are full of people who have a variety of needs. The project church has a goal of impacting lives with the love and light of Christ. In order for needs to be met all of the leaders of the church should understand at least from a foundational perspective, the liberating power of God. This comes through the preaching of God's word from the pastor on a regular basis. The leadership team alignment includes a community of disciples that are equipped to carry on the New Testament model to live as Believers in a world that is full of unbelievers. Thus, Dulles final chapter in his amalgamation of the previous five models of his book come into play in a practical way.

The notion that liberation theology can benefit all areas of lack is embraced. This would include material and spiritual deficits that people may encounter. Jesus died so that we could be free. Free from racism. Free from classism. Free from sexism. While the recent political affairs demonstrate that we still live in a divided country, liberation theology in practice can still push us closer to the hope that Jesus made available to us on the Cross. We are moving from the era of an African American Democratic President of the United States to a man who has little regard for people that are not in the highest tax bracket. This is going to require the church to lean into the liberating power of God even more, along with providing the intimate setting of the Spirit that was described as a model of ecclesiology.

The project church does not function with only one theological practice as primary but there are some that will best relate to the context and construct of the congregation. Like most churches, this church has more female members than male. The

prominent race of the church members is African American. Thus, black liberation theology is commonly practiced in the midst of missional moments and within messages of proclamation.

The current leaders of the project church represent the congregation, which is primarily female. In addition, with a female pastor, womanist theology is seen and heard probably much more than it is understood by congregants and community. From the history of the church as a relatively new church start (2010) many new Believers are coming into the faith only seeing a female as the visionary and leader. So there may not be another point of reference for male dominated or patriarchal pastoral leadership. There is sensitivity to the plight of racism, classism and even the consistent patriarchal nature of pastoring in the United States.

Elevation theology is relevant to the project church when the needs of the congregation and community are taken into consideration. The church edifice sits in an area that used to be full of businesses and thriving. A shift has taken place within the past ten years and small businesses, and marketplaces in the neighborhood are no longer thriving. Crime rates are up and many are unemployed and underemployed. God is the primary agent of elevationism. Speaking the love of God to power will challenge the church to move beyond superficial intellect, educational status, or resume building. However, the appropriate skills and encouragement can still come from the project community church.

The project church sees a community need for economic, educational, and employment empowerment. These are three missional goals that the church would like to support in order to partner with the community and congregation. Having leaders that are

sensitive to these needs and trained to support these needs with spiritual and practical resources will be paramount in missional sustainability. These needs are met with the theological principles of liberation theology along with the theology of work.

The church has to be more than a spiritual escape where people come on Sundays and special events to feel good and get away from real life trauma. While we seek to produce and enhance relationships, we cannot just be a gathering place for spiritual encounters. The church must continue to become an equipping statement where the spiritual encounter is coupled with practical life application and relevant experience. Building a community of disciples will take work and training for the leaders of the church that trickle down to the rest of the congregation. While this model is considered by some theologians to be too hierarchical, it will likely produce the desired result if the right leaders are selected and trained.

The theology of work provides a framework to understand work as a holy event instead of a mundane task and chore. When God was first introduced to the Bible, the first order of business was speaking things into existence. In essence God began working by speaking and then continued that work by providing structure and order. Not one fish was created until there was a sea to put them in. Not one animal was made until there was a habitat for them to thrive in. Likewise, human beings were not created until there was a place for them to dwell.

When Adam was made, he was given two jobs. One was to name the animals. The other was to work the land. Work was prominent even in the early days of the Bible. Since we were made in the image of God, that work ethic should be evident as we grow as disciples of Christ. In order for there to be leadership alignment, there should be an

appreciation from lay leaders that working in ministry is holy not harmful. To balance the approach, the pastor should understand that people who work in secular jobs while serving in church have other priorities. This will cause some challenges when seeking to recruit, train and equip leaders with the core values necessary to provide sustainability to continue the mission and vision of the church.

In addition to worship, the project church is adding more focus to developing disciples that are empowered to live abundantly. The church is also narrowing down the missional focuses to the three that will do the most good in church and community. Following the thrust of womanist theology, parenting, education and support of the family is a primary goal for the church. For economic empowerment, more teaching and small groups will be formed to help people to support financial freedom. For educational empowerment, the church partners with local schools to support the work of the education system and also provides a reading room within the church building to help young children fall in love with reading. There is a goal to provide tutoring programs in the future. Referencing Dwight Hopkins work about black liberation theology, reading alone will not make a person free but it starts us on a road to being empowered.

The project church is also starting a new program this year providing job training from a biblical perspective. This ties in directly with the theology of work and will be offered for free to anyone who is unemployed or underemployed. When a person finds worth in work and has pride in doing so, they are able to take care of their personal needs. When the emphasis of the church goes from providing handouts of food and clothing, to providing the equipping skills necessary to be gainfully employed, using the word of God

as foundational support, we enhance the kingdom by adding contemporary disciples to the marketplace.

CHAPTER FIVE

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

A church that is focused on equipping and empowering diverse servant leaders to implement effective mission-minded ministry should have a strategy that is based on proven methods. This chapter will identify and examine theories related to leadership development and alignment. Leadership alignment theories, biblically based strategies and ministry models will be evaluated, along with models informed by the corporate world.

Theoretical foundations in ministry practice will include models used in churches and religious organizations that create leadership alignment. Leadership alignment for the purpose of the project is the ability to align common goals in a way that connects diverse gifts and personalities for a common goal of mission minded ministry. Coaching and teamwork strategies apply to both the church and the secular environment and those theories will be explored.

Ministry themes that are the most relevant for the project focus are church leadership, administration and ministry coaching. Jesus leading the disciples is a key principle to explore since Jesus had a certain amount of time to prepare his disciples for greater ministry prior to leaving them. This is often the case with pastoral leadership, especially those who desire to create community impact within a certain amount of time.

Resources such as *The Pastor's Playbook*, and other coaching and team based disciplines will be reviewed and presented.¹ One example of a book that includes Jesus as a central model for leadership is *Lead Like Jesus for Churches*, written by Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges.² Blanchard shares a journey of a church that has lost its appeal to the community and includes not just leadership lessons from Jesus, but also the power of leadership that is motivated by love.

Teamwork is a prevalent theme in leadership alignment so the challenge of how to make vision stick in church was evaluated, using relevant theological voices. A book by Kenneth O. Gangel called *Team Leadership in Christian Ministry* is a great resource that examines how to use multiple gifts to build a unified vision.³ Gangel, along with George Cladis, author of *Leading the Team Based Church* offers some interesting views on how to create a strategically aligned leadership team that develops a team based church.⁴ Cladis argues that team leadership is a relatively new way to think about ministry, as opposed to the more popular hierarchy. He suggests that the process of collaboration mirrors the relationship between the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit and promotes this as a fresh, relevant ministry model for the current culture.

Themes of coaching, strategic planning leadership teams also are pervasive in the secular business world. Some strategies from business models can translate easily into

¹ Stan Toler and Larry Gilbert, *The Pastor's Playbook: Coaching Your Team for Ministry* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2000).

² Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, *Lead Like Jesus for Churches: Loving God and Loving Each Other* (Nashville, TN: W Publishing, 2016).

³ Kenneth O. Gangel, *Team Leadership in Christian Ministry: Using Multiple Gifts to Build a Unified Vision* (Chicago, IL: The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, 1997).

⁴ George Cladis, *Leading the Team-Based Church: How Pastors and Church Staffs Can Grow Together into a Powerful Fellowship of Leaders* (San Francisco, CA: Josey-Bass Publishers, 1999).

any setting to include church ministry. Leadership industry giants such as John C. Maxwell and Jim Collins were also consulted to determine synergy between corporate methodologies and ministry. These two authors have created best sellers and are household names for many business professionals and companies. In Collin's book, *Good to Great*, the author shares extensive research that drills down to the final outcome of businesses that transitioned from good to great. In addition, the author shares the leadership motivation for making the decision to do so.⁵

Chip and Dan Heath advise that there are some particular ways to make ideas stick in their book *Made to Stick*.⁶ Some of these concepts will be used to compare and contrast vision sharing strategies in ministry references. Some characteristics and qualities of team members will also be described as outlined by leadership experts. The final goal is to determine how this theoretical review and study is foundational to the anticipated project.

Theoretical Foundations in Ministry Practice

One way to achieve servant leader alignment is through a ministry specific coaching process. This approach is closely aligned with sports coaching but includes biblical models as support. Several writers recommend this approach and include not only the role of pastors as coaching leaders but the importance of supportive ministry partners seeing themselves as a part of the winning team. The coaching model of ministry

⁵ Jim Collins, *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap and Others Don't* (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 2001).

⁶ Chip Heath and Dan Heath, *Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die* (New York, NY: The Random House Publishing Group, 2007).

requires an understanding of the pastor as coach with several specific action teams that are trained to win.

Toler and Gilbert say in *The Pastor's Playbook* that a church that losing focus on purpose is destined to die. To avoid death, the church should seek to create an environment where everyone is valued as part of the team. To be an exceptional pastor coach, the pastor should possess some inherent belief systems that include being self-aware and courageous, accepting of others, enjoy challenges, being good communicators and valuing the giftedness in others. A sense of partnership motivates ministry team members to work even harder.⁷

The coaching strategy noted by Toler and Gilbert includes the plan of having Ministry Action Teams, which is a component of team ministry. Ministry Action Teams come together with the goal to get something accomplished. Various definitions of team ministry are included in the book. Chuck Bowman states a ministry action team is “a team of two or more people with two things in common: a shared goal and good communication.”⁸ R. Daniel Reeves definition is also included which says the same thing in a different way. Per Reeves, “Team ministry is ownership and self initiated vision in which members carry out plans they themselves have conceived or have had a part in conceptualizing.” In order for these teams to be effective it is suggested that they have three things in common: shared values and vision, common faith and improved productivity.⁹

⁷ Toler and Gilbert, *The Pastor's Playbook*, 40-41.

⁸ Toler and Gilbert, *The Pastor's Playbook*, 13.

⁹ Toler and Gilbert, *The Pastor's Playbook*, 13-15.

The first part of the book evaluates and explains more theories without focusing on model implementation strategies. However it does include the biblical basis for why pastoral coaching methods and team leadership should be present in the church environment. Paul told the Philippians to stand firm in one spirit (Phil 1:27). The writers explain that to implement a team based approach to ministry; it has to begin with the pastor or coach making the appropriate team selections. Qualities of a “Dream Leadership Team” are further explained using the analogy of King David and his winning warriors. The top six are noted:

1. Leaders should be equipped and skilled.
2. Leaders should be in shape. This refers to being mature in their faith
3. Leaders should have a heart relationship with the Visionary leader.
4. Leaders should be joined by revelation.
5. Leaders should be given responsibility
6. Leaders should understand the times¹⁰

The book does include steps that pastors can use to create supportive team members. They include educating the laity, motivating the laity and training the laity.¹¹ It is written with the pastor in mind, and provides guidelines to build, strengthen, and collaborate with ministry teams. The pastor being seen as a coach of a team instead of the whole team is still believed to be a relatively new concept. Therefore, the process of creating this type of environment and the right time will take strategy, time, and dedicated effort in order to achieve a team win.

¹⁰ Toler and Gilbert, *The Pastor's Playbook*, 70-71.

¹¹ Toler and Gilbert, *The Pastor's Playbook*, 72-73.

Another reference to creating a dream team was in the work produced by Kirbyjon Caldwell and Walt Kallestad called *Entrepreneurial Faith*.¹² Instead of a top down approach to leadership, entrepreneurial faith fosters an environment that creates opportunity in grass roots initiatives. Unlike the notion of focusing on unity for the board that Osborne supports, Caldwell and Kallestad believe that the dream team consists of the whole congregation being empowered enough to make things better for the local church. The key job of the entrepreneurial leader is to create an entrepreneurial environment.¹³

The 3M Company allows every employee to use fifteen percent of his or her time dreaming of new ways to do a task or come up with a new product or service that will benefit their customers. This fact is used as a part of the model for entrepreneurial faith partners. They too must be in an environment where they are free to dream of ways to reach the community and carry out the mission of the church. By way of a model the author suggests that the faith leader must practice what he or she would want the leadership team to practice. The specific model is based on leadership behavior. To create an entrepreneurial environment the leader should take time to dream, promote risk taking, be a road builder, and plug into the power of passion.¹⁴

Promoting risk taking in a church environment will require some coaching to ensure there is enough balance between taking unwise or reckless risks and being open to fail if it will lead to a better outcome. To become a road builder means that the visionary

¹² Kirbyjon Caldwell, Walt Kallestad, and Paul Sorenson, *Entrepreneurial Faith: Launching Bold Initiatives to Expand God's Kingdom* (Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook Press, 2004).

¹³ Caldwell, Kallestad, and Sorenson, *Entrepreneurial Faith*, 145.

¹⁴ Caldwell, Kallestad, and Sorenson, *Entrepreneurial Faith*, 147-148.

leader should try to minimize the time that they fight fires. Instead they would be about the business of finding new paths to get to the desired outcome.

The result of creating this kind of environment is that the team will include the whole church and particular persons will emerge who are equipped and available to take care of the fires that the pastor had previously been accustomed to handling. That will help to make sure that the pastor has more time to do what he or she is called to do. For that person to truly be an asset the pastor as the lead entrepreneur must do some introspective work to determine core strengths and weaknesses. Focus on strengths and allow others who are gifted to compensate for weaknesses. This builds a fully functional and spiritually aligned ministry team.¹⁵

A unified church and healthy leadership team does not just happen. It has to be a priority. Larry Osborne, who wrote *Sticky Team* stands on that claim.¹⁶ Osborne is the lead pastor of North Coast Church in Vista, California.¹⁷ The model he suggests for church leadership alignment begins with placing a priority on unity. Through his personal experience, he explains that putting church growth goals on hold and focusing on molding a cohesive leadership team made a huge difference in the ministry. Creating effective and aligned leadership teams will take more than just putting good people on a team because if those people do not get along, they will not work together to accomplish the ministry mission. The advice that he shares is to begin with the church board being

¹⁵ Caldwell, Kallestad, and Sorenson, *Entrepreneurial Faith*, 149.

¹⁶ Larry Osborne, *Sticky Teams: Keeping Your Leadership Team and Staff on the Same Page* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing, 2010).

¹⁷ Larry Osborne, "Teaching Pastors," North Coast Church, accessed April 12, 2017, <http://www.northcoastchurch.com/about/teaching-pastors/>.

unified because it is the foundation of the church. If the foundation rots, the rest of the church will not be able to stand.

Osborne suggests starting with the board and then moving on to the church staff and servant team leaders. The plan and the vision can be good, but if there is bickering and infighting among those who move the vision forward then it will be hard to get anything accomplished.¹⁸ Unity is a vague term so Osborne defines it as the combination of three attributes: doctrinal unity, respect and friendship and philosophical unity. Doctrinal unity is when leaders are in agreement with the statement of faith for the church. The attribute of respect and friendship requires the team to have opportunities to build camaraderie. This is especially important since many boards and even church staffs are made up of strangers. Philosophical unity is harder to achieve but it means having basic agreement about priorities and methods of ministry.¹⁹

Using the team metaphor, Osborne espouses that no team can win if every player chooses his own game plan. Therefore, everyone must be aligned to the same mission, vision, and methods. He admits that getting everyone on the same page is difficult and is one of the most important roles of leadership. One of the barriers to alignment is what he calls educational separation. This is an organizational barrier that predominantly affects congregations where the leader has significantly more education and training than everyone else. In many cases the senior pastor has extensive theological education and ministry training that the servant leader team does not have. With this in mind, the leader must make sure that leadership alignment is not attempted by lobbying. The goal of

¹⁸ Osborne, *Sticky Teams*, 12.

¹⁹ Osborne, *Sticky Teams*, Kindle.

lobbying is to have everyone lean to the decision of the leader. The better method to achieve leadership alignment is appropriate training. Training will require the most experienced leader to share what have learned with others to bridge the gap.²⁰

To promote alignment among board members, Osborne suggests having non-business meetings on a regular basis. These meetings will serve as a specific time for fellowship, training, and prayer without having to vote on any church matters. Staff alignment is achieved by establishing a term called “ministry plumb lines.”²¹ This is simply making sure the programs, ministries, and decisions line up with the core values and priorities of the church. He also includes five tools to keep the congregation aligned with the pastor, namely 1) a clear and simple mission statement 2) a front loaded pastor’s class 3) the drip method of preaching 4) sermon based small groups 5) short and sweet congregational meetings.²²

The late twentieth century has indicated that traditional churches are declining in their influence and effectiveness. According to George Cladis, senior pastor and team leader at Noroton Presbyterian Church in Connecticut, the decline is primarily due to traditional church organizational structures. There is a rise in new entrepreneurial congregations. There is a need for team-based churches that meet the demand of entrepreneurial congregations. Agreeing with Osborne, Cladis asserts that if a church is going to have a healthy ministry and develop Christian community there must be relational equity among the members of the key leadership team.²³

²⁰ Osborne, “Chapter 9,” *Sticky Teams*, Kindle.

²¹ Osborne, “Chapter 11,” *Sticky Teams*, Kindle.

²² Osborne, “Chapter 12,” *Sticky Teams*, Kindle.

²³ Cladis, preface in *Leading the Team Based Church*, Kindle.

Team leadership helps to eradicate the problem that exists in many Christian organizations. There is often a misunderstanding that makes people focus on one person leading, similar to Moses leading others out of the wilderness. The Old Testament contains stories of individual leaders but the New Testament changes the pattern. However, many religious leaders and pastors do not know how to build leadership teams.²⁴ Blending spiritual gifts with leadership roles is more important now than it was before.

Ken Blanchard, one of the most influential leadership experts in the world and Phil Hodges, a former human resource and industrial relations manager for the Xerox company came together to co-author a book about the importance of leading with the love of Jesus.²⁵ In the fifteenth chapter the focus is on 1 Corinthians 13. Love is the common denominator that Jesus had in mind for his church and how it is going to be accomplished. Leadership teams must include love as a core value for what they believe and how they operate as a ministry team. Love should be demonstrated and will show up with evidence of humility and forgiveness among those in leadership. This will be felt by the congregation and shared with other members and those who visit but it absolutely must begin at the top with the visionary leader.²⁶

²⁴ Kenneth O. Gangel, introduction in *Team Leadership in Christian Ministry: Using Multiple Gifts to Build a Unified Vision* (Chicago, IL: Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, 1997), Kindle.

²⁵ Blanchard and Hodges, *Lead Like Jesus for Churches*, 112.

²⁶ Blanchard and Hodges, *Lead Like Jesus for Churches*, 112.

Theoretical Foundations from Another Discipline

Business strategies and corporate models lend insight into how to properly align leadership in a way that will implement the vision. There are a host of leadership and business resources that provide support to the doctoral project. Two competing models from the banking industry provide valuable information to this work. One model relates to how people should be recruited in key leadership positions. The prevailing decision is that a good company would get the right people on the team, put the wrong people off the team and then decide where the bus would go.

Wells Fargo and Bank of America had different strategies to enhance their business, and one of them was truly able to create a leadership team that could effectively carry out the vision. In 1983 Wells Fargo began a fifteen-year shift in being a banking industry leader. This was due to their approach to dealing with banking deregulation many years prior. The CEO in the early nineteen seventies was Dick Cooley and he did not know how the changes would affect the company. He decided that the best approach was to hire the absolute best people even if they did not have a specific job in mind for them. When the changes came as a result of the banking rules the people who were hired were smart enough and flexible enough to deal with them and the company was able to thrive. While other banks fell behind the general stock market, Wells Fargo tripled their performance. The approach was simple: Get the best people. Build them into the best managers that you can and accept the fact that some of them will be recruited somewhere else.²⁷

²⁷ Collins, *Good to Great*, 41-43.

Bank of America took a different approach. They hired what was called “weak generals” or placeholders for positions to ensure that the higher levels of leadership did not get offended. These people were simply waiting to be told what to do. They were not passionate enough to have an opinion so they waited to respond instead of proactively engaging big issues. This approach did not prove to be beneficial to them. They lost over one million dollars in the mid nineteen eighties. Then they changed their approach to want to hire strong middle management and ended up recruiting from the competition, which was Wells Fargo.²⁸

Collins coins the aforementioned concept as the “First Who Then What” model for creating effective performance among teams. This is difficult to do because it requires you to put more effort into finding the right people than developing the strategy. The people issue is not new but the timing of what should come first is the challenge.²⁹

Fannie Mae Corporation shared this same process for the management team. David Maxwell, CEO was being pressured by the corporate board to do something dramatic to rescue the company. Instead of doing something dramatic and acting on instinct he focused on getting the right people on the management team. He weeded out anyone who was not willing to do the highest level of work by offering them a way out. He shares his high expectations and fourteen of the twenty-six people on the management team left. They were all replaced by smart, hard-working, executives. He took the risk of

²⁸ Collins, *Good to Great*, 41-43.

²⁹ Collins, *Good to Great*, 41.

having high turnover initially in order to create the stability and functionality desired to make the company great.³⁰

According to the research done in Collins book both Wells Fargo and Fannie Mae success stories illustrate the model that the who question should be answered before the what question. Having the right people in place to them was more important than strategy, organizational structure, business tactics, or technology.³¹ The leadership strengths of the CEOs were that they did not want to be the smartest person on the team with a bunch of helpers. Instead they wanted the smartest people on the team.

It is further explained that management teams who decide on who should be on the team before the “what” move to greatness. A genius with many helpers is categorized as a comparison company. They first try to set a vision for where to drive the bus. Then they develop a road map for the bus and finally enlist a crew of highly capable people to help to make the vision happen. Bringing on the right people before determining the right direction is different than traditional rules of thought in business models. The people who are passionate and capable will also bring the rigor and awareness to make the company great.³²

Stanford Business School conducted a six year research project in the early nineteen nineties. The project was called “Built to Last” and the goal was to determine what it took to build a company from the ground that would be sustainable over the years. Eighteen companies who had stood the test of time were examined to produce research

³⁰ Collins, *Good to Great*, 41-43.

³¹ Collins, *Good to Great*, 45.

³² Collins, *Good to Great*, 44.

results. Some of the companies examined were Proctor and Gamble, American Express, Johnson and Johnson along with Wal-Mart and Sony. They also did eighteen paired comparisons using similar industry companies such as Walt Disney versus Columbia Pictures, Marriot versus Howard Johnson and so forth.³³

The desired end result was to make some distinctions between companies that were good and those that had moved to greatness. One observation is that enduring companies preserve their core values and purpose while their business strategies and operating practices change with the culture. An example of this is Walt Disney. Disney started as an animator of short films. He then moved on to full length feature films. He visited several amusement parks that were designed to be fun but were staffed by rude people. He decided to take a bold step to create something where the purpose and people were aligned. Throughout all of the changes from cartoons, to movies, to Disney World and the Disney family of amusements parks, the core themes remained the foundation. There is a passionate belief in creative imagination, fanatic attention to detail, abhorrence of cynicism and the preservation of “Disney Magic” in every Disney project. These values have stood the test of time in the midst of a changing culture.³⁴

The four outcomes of the Built to Last project concluded that enduring companies are not built around people or a single great idea. They are built to endure through multiple generations of leaders and product life cycles. Enduring companies embrace both extremes at the same time instead of just holding fast to one outcome. For example, a great company will figure out how to have purpose and profit, freedom and

³³ Collins, *Good to Great*, 188-189.

³⁴ Collins, *Good to Great*, 196.

responsibility, etc. Thirdly, companies that endure change in times will share a core ideology. Core values are instilled along with core purpose. Finally, enduring companies will preserve the core and stimulate progress. This allows the company to preserve the core ideology while promoting innovation and improvement along the way.³⁵

John Maxwell declares that teamwork is necessary in order to get anything done. His truth is that no lone individual has ever done anything of significant value. Even the Lone Ranger from the television show was not alone but had assistance to carry out assignments. One is too small of a number to achieve greatness. If we want to do something big it must be done in partnership with others. This is what Maxwell calls the law of significance.³⁶

To be able to fully surrender to the success of team leadership it is important to understand why we often try to do things alone. Maxwell identifies a few reasons in his book. First, there is the human ego. Leaders must admit that they cannot do everything and there is no superman or superwoman. Secondly, humans deal with insecurity. This is when a leader starts to feel threatened by other people. Insecurity causes leaders to surround themselves with weak people. Only secure leaders give power to others while insecure leaders usually avoid building teams altogether. Thirdly, some leaders are naïve to the fact that team leadership accomplishes more. Finally, a leader may not have the right temperament to build teams. They are not outgoing so team building and team participation is something that does not come to mind. When they face challenges, it does

³⁵ Collins, *Good to Great*, 197-198.

³⁶ John Maxwell, *The Seventeen Indisputable Laws of Teamwork Workbook: Embrace Them and Empower Your Team* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2003), Kindle.

not occur to them to enlist the help and support of others for assistance. Maxwell believes that even the most introverted person can enjoy the benefits of being a part of a team.³⁷

Most company models researched identify as the importance of connecting to core values. To explore what makes core values resonant with community or corporations Chip Heath and Dan Heath shared six principles to make any idea or value stick. First, it must be simple. A one sentence statement that is simple and profound will resonate longer and stronger than trying to develop ten points. Secondly, we must be counterintuitive by going against the norm. Another principle is to be concrete and explain values in terms of human action. Heath and Heath argue that many mission statements, strategies and visions never get to whom they are intended because they are ambiguous to the point of being meaningless.³⁸

Credibility, emotions and stories round out the list of six principles that they discovered. To make ideas and concepts stick they have to carry their own credentials. This involves asking people to try the idea for themselves instead of always providing hard numbers and statistics from other sources. Emotions are something that connects all human beings. We are wired to feel things for people. So to make an idea stick we should look for ways to have an emotional pull on the target audience. Finally, if we want people to act on our ideas, telling stories should be a part of the vision casting and value sharing. Hearing stories repeatedly about a particular idea or concept helps develop the mental catalogue. In turn, this helps minds to adapt when the situation requires action.³⁹

³⁷ Maxwell, *The Seventeen Indisputable Laws*, Kindle.

³⁸ Chip Heath and Dan Heath, *Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die* (New York, NY: Random House Publishing Group, 2007), Kindle.

³⁹ Heath and Heath, *Made to Stick*, Kindle.

In her book *Teaming*, Amy Edmondson, a Harvard Business School professor shares more support that team leadership is the way of the future organizations.⁴⁰ She defines the term teaming as the activity of working together. It presents a new, more flexible way for organizations to carry out interdependent tasks. Teaming is an active process that is not like the traditional concept of a team. It is not a static entity but a fluid network of interconnected individuals. The goal of teaming is to improve, solve problems and provide innovation. Effective teaming requires the ability to relate to others, listen to other points of view, coordinate actions and making shared decisions.

Teaming per Edmondson is a verb and a new way of working. Like sports teams, bands and orchestras, teaming purports that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. All players on the team understand that they succeed or fail together. The win or lose as a team. Organizational development and success depends on effective teaming. The one area of distinction in this model is that when there is teaming in the workplace, it often has to be done without taking the time to share personal history and prior experience with the team members. This is a stark contrast to the ministry model that described unity as being a key component in achieving missional goals.

Teaming in a work environment will require team members to be flexible and recognize interdependence. They will also have to establish trust and use new strategies to share information quickly. Teaming is the engine of organizational learning. In other words, the focus of teaming is to accomplish organizational learning. Organizational learning alone does not provide more efficient operations but the shared learning will

⁴⁰ Amy C. Edmondson, *Teaming: How Organizations Learn, Innovate, and Compete in the Knowledge Economy* (San Francisco, CA: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2012).

empower those on the team to come up with innovative ways to deliver products or services more effectively and efficiently.⁴¹

This theoretical study is foundational to the anticipated project because the research indicates some themes that are connected. Leadership alignment can be done in a variety of ways. It is possible to pull some information from the ministry models shared and the business leadership models to come up with a framework for the particular project context. The terms of teaming, team leadership, entrepreneurial faith, synergy, alignment and coaching all play a role in producing leadership alignment for sustainability.

The research provides support that the pastor must set the right environment to ensure that teamwork is valued and even failure is permissible when it comes as the result of trying to carry out the vision. Some things that were not expected from earlier assumptions is that it might be best to select the right people before determining the right direction to follow. This was not considered earlier because the driving force of the church is the mission and vision. However, now that the church had a few years to see some of the challenges of carrying out the mission and vision in a way that the church members and community can relate to, some things should be revisited. These things include Collins work of making sure the right people are in place before determining the next step.

Entrepreneurial faith was an important concept to apply to this work because the context of the project is a church that began six years ago. Launching bold initiatives to expand the kingdom of God is how the church was started. Using Jesus as a biblical

⁴¹ Edmondson, *Teaming*, Kindle.

model for leadership is also helpful. He took the time to build relationship with the disciples, which equipped them with the entrepreneurial faith that they need to sustain ministry after he was not with him. This is of particular importance since sustainability is a key need within the project context.

Sustainable models were also described when researching corporate comparisons from Collins' book. Understanding how companies have lasted through generations will help to build the sustainability model for church. Sharing core values and purpose and protecting those through various generations are key considerations for the church. In addition, there was confirmation that the church is not founded on one person or one idea but is built on something that can transcend through generations. However, to make sure that the church does not operate outside of the intended purpose, the teaming concept should be practiced more.

Teaming in the business model for organization learning connections to the ministry model characteristics of when there is a leader who has more knowledge than the rest of the team. In the ministry model it was suggested that the leader begins to share with the team members what he or she knows to level the playing field. In theory this is similar to the teaming process of organizational learning. Teams who are learning together are often able to make better decisions to improve results.

One piece of research that does not fit with the project is that teaming requires team members to work fast while being flexible, often having no history with people on the team. This concept may not work well in ministry, especially considering that one of the mission components is to be relational while witnessing. It is much more suitable for the church to draw on the experience of Larry Osborne who believes that unity is the

highest priority. To the extent that the board and decision makers of the church can be unified and have relationship, the group will be able to accomplish more.

Integrating the theoretical research for the project will require breaking it down into sizable pieces. Entrepreneurial faith is a requirement and it provides the right environment for others to be effective team members. It is not good enough to be the expert with helpers but being a team member that is interdependent on others to accomplish missional motives is expected. This process has begun but it will take some time for members and servant leaders to understand his or her role as a member of the team.

With that said, teaching is going to be an integral part of the model. Team work and team leadership is not something that can be done without intentionality. This foundational study provided several ways to create that type of DNA in the church. This include classes that the pastor will teach to new members, training done with current leaders and sprinkling in some of the values in the sermonic moments.

Connection around core values showed up in many of the resources studied. Making the core values, vision and mission stick will require some work as well. The Heath resource shared valuable principles to make sure that ideas that the church want to get across to church members and community members stick. People cannot follow what they do not understand and they cannot support what they do not see in practice. It is important to value what is simple and concrete for people to connect with now and protect in the future.

Leaders must ensure that ministry action teams are in place. Regardless of what they are named, they should understand that the reason the team is together is to

accomplish something by taking action. Too often there are ministries that have a name only but no action or movement for the sake of ministry. This is not sustainable nor does it accomplish the mission to be relevant, responsible, relational and relentless in the call to draw others to Jesus Christ and to reclaim the disconnected.

The most relevant themes were to integrate the team model of leadership even more in the church, and becoming a coach to star team members without being the only one equipped on the team. This requires ensuring that the team members are properly trained and have the space to share better ways of doing things. There is a need for a concerted effort to get the wrong people off the bus when knowing they are not helpful in productivity. This is not easy to do since leaders are often working with small numbers of people who even attempt to participate.

CHAPTER SIX

PROJECT ANALYSIS

This project examined the concept of leadership alignment among various servant leaders within the church. The goal was to determine what is necessary to achieve the type of leadership alignment that will effectively implement the church mission and vision in a sustainable manner. If leadership is not properly aligned around the core values of the church mission and vision, the church will not have a positive impact on membership or the community that it serves.

Upon the analysis of the context and current leadership structure, it was apparent that some intentional work would need to be done in this area in order for the church to grow and impact lives. The church began in 2010 and with the diverse backgrounds, serving experience levels, and theological constructs of the congregation the researcher deemed this project imperative. The hypothesis was that better leadership training based on the core values, mission and vision would provide effective leadership alignment which would in turn provide sustainable impact.

The problem is that we do not have enough qualified, mission minded, vision led leaders to make an adequate impact in the church or community that we serve. The problem is a result of the fact that there has not been adequate leadership training that connects church work to the church mission, vision and core values. Key areas of need

within the church context community is educational empowerment, employment empowerment and economic empowerment.

The researcher was led to review biblical texts that related to how God orchestrated ministry alignment between human beings for community impact. In the Old Testament, Elijah was called as a prophet but was providentially assigned to find Elisha as a mentee who eventually became a successor. In First Kings 19:19-21, Elijah finds Elisha with oxen and throws his mantle upon him. The significance of this to the researcher's work is that there is a selection process for determining available servant leaders in church. Elisha responded by leaving what he knew to do by occupation what he was called to do in ministry. While this is not the requirement for servant leaders in the local church, there should be an understanding that effective ministry work requires commitment.

Together Elijah and Elisha impacted the community by dealing with the needs of the people. They often bridged the socio-economic gaps in place by political power by using the power of God. As a result, they were able to supernaturally deal with the issues and ills of society and add believers in the process. The researcher further expressed that the relational equity between Elijah and Elisha made Elisha a better fit to be a successor after Elijah was gone. Church leadership alignment is not only important when the chief visionary is no longer. Alignment is important for unified execution of the church mission.

This was supported by the New Testament text which was written post resurrection. In Acts 2:42-47, the researcher highlights the impact that unified and aligned believers can make in the community around them. Even as the church grew, the

newly appointed apostles and fellow believers were empowered by the Holy Spirit to sell their possessions to ensure that the needs of the community were met. They were all together and on one accord. They were different by design and no doubt possessed different levels of experience and exposure to Jesus. However, they were so committed to the mission of the church as expressed by Jesus in Matthew 28:16-20 that they were willing to sacrifice their own goods.

Historically, the researcher reviewed the Enlightenment period, Civil Rights and other schools of thought and ended with the post modern approach to leadership alignment to affect change and make impact. Through review of the Enlightenment period and key schools of thought along with analyzing historical figures of the postmodern era of leadership, the researcher identified similarities and contrasts that relate to leadership alignment. Similar to the Enlightenment school of thought, postmodern leadership believes that there is room for educational support in religious settings.

Our black leaders who transitioned from focusing on industrial education only to providing education that would lead people to a higher level of purpose and productivity have laid the foundation for churches in our current culture. Churches should be equipping leaders who equip other leaders, not from a top down approach from the traditional and tribal context, but from the use of any relevant influences that come along to make the church better to carry out its missional purpose.

In churches, industrialized education could be compared to a training program that would for example, only teach an usher how to serve as an usher without supplying the spiritual equipping for how to apply hospitality principles and scriptural support to his

or her own life. We must move away from just having enough training and discipleship to make a person fit for church work inside four walls of an edifice, but instead move towards a holistic approach to connect with the higher learning principles taught and initiated by W.E.B. DuBois. Lest we will have a bunch of people who know how to serve in church functions, but are not successfully leading Christian lives.

The postmodern model asserts that even persons outside of the core leadership team can influence results. If they voice their opinion to someone who is a part of the “known” decision makers, that opinion should be just as credible as those entered on an online survey or church suggestion box. Therefore, we can utilize a bottom-up approach in order to reach people and invite them into a richer relationship with Christ.

The Enlightenment thinking era is similar to the Post-Modern leadership era in that there was no one place that all ideas flowed. In the Age of Reason, different ideas were explored, collected, and distributed using new methods. In the Post-Modern leadership model, it is understood that the central area of ideas, insight and authority cannot come from one person at the top but is shared among those who have wisdom and knowledge about the condition or problem at hand that needs to be solved.

Also important is the comparison between the selection and training of leadership and management in the Post-Modern era. In the early years of the church, the “whosoever will” approach to leadership and servant selection caused us to operate in traditional ways, where the top leader was responsible for motivating and influencing others for the best possible outcome. This, along with the lack of purposeful training for new members or intentional training for most leadership and those serving in ministry resulted in a lack of sustainable investment.

The researcher is an African American female so theologies that were relevant to the doctoral project had to include how she functions as a pastoral leader. To that end, womanist theology, and black liberation theology was researched and a new theology called the theology of work was highlighted. This theology is a recent project that connects effective church work to the divine creative nature of God. These theologies could not be explored without including ecclesiology which is the theology of the church as a body.

The notion that liberation theology can benefit all areas of lack is embraced. This would include material and spiritual deficits that people may encounter. Jesus died so that we could be free. These freedoms include freedom from racism, classism, and sexism. This is going to require the church to lean into the liberating power of God even more, along with providing the intimate setting of the Spirit that was described as a model of ecclesiology. The ecclesiastical model of a Community of dDisciples fits well into a New Testament tradition church in contemporary society. It is derived from the notion that there is not one model or one theology that can be held in an effective, functional church. After Jesus' resurrection, there was a new community of disciples that were empowered by the Holy Spirit to continue the work that Jesus began.

Elevation theology was introduced in the theological research and is relevant to the project church when the needs of the congregation and community are taken into consideration. The church edifice sits in an area that used to be full of businesses and thriving. A shift has taken place within the past ten years and small businesses, and marketplaces in the neighborhood are no longer thriving. Crime rates are up and many are unemployed and underemployed. God is the primary agent of elevationism.

Theoretical themes that are the most relevant for the project focus are church leadership, administration and ministry coaching. Jesus leading the disciples is also noteworthy since Jesus had a certain amount of time to prepare his disciples for greater ministry prior to leaving them. This is often the case with pastoral leadership, especially those who desire to create community impact within a certain amount of time.

The researcher looked at ministry models that emphasized team work among leaders. One model taught the pastor as being the coach of several specialized teams called ministry action teams. Entrepreneurial faith is an alignment value that is particularly important to the context of the researcher. As a newly developed church of only six years, there is a certain appeal for leaders to have entrepreneurial faith while doing ministry. To the extent that the teams have the right members the final outcome is that goals would be successfully implemented. Understanding and embracing core values were key themes among both the ministry and secular models.

Business models were also reviewed to determine how great teams made great impact. A common theme that swept through both the ministry models and the corporate leadership models is that successful teams must unite around core values and purpose. Companies that had been able to stand the test of time were researched since sustainability is a part of the researcher's project. One such model of sustainability was the Built to Last Model. All of the research in this model indicated that in order for companies to be sustainable, they must have a core value and purpose that is well understood and closely protected, but is open enough to be executed over the course of changing culture and generations.

Team leadership helps to eradicate the problem that exists in many Christian organizations and is still a relatively new concept. It requires intentional training of the congregation and servant leaders. Creating an atmosphere that welcomes new ideas to reach the desired goal and permits people to fail forward is the role of a pastor that wants to see a shift in leadership and effective alignment.

Leadership in this context includes the senior pastor and all servant leaders to include the diaconate, lay ministers, and executive level ministry such as finance ministry and members of the church executive advisory council. As the pastor of the church, the researcher began to notice that although there was a theme of empowerment, love, collaboration and fellowship preached, taught and demonstrated from the pulpit, congregants were not always experiencing that beyond the Sunday service. The church grew and gained new members, but also experienced some turnover especially after members started to participate in or lead ministries at church. This could be attributed to having a contrasting experience between expectations and reality.

In speaking with ministry members and ministry servant leaders, it became more apparent that some who had been put in leadership roles may not be sure of how to exemplify the mission and vision within their own ministry context for the greater good of the church. There were also challenges with collaboration, team building, and building relational equity. These attributes are all written and shared within the core values, mission and vision. However, the implementation of these characteristics in practice had not been intentionally developed in those who lead church ministries. Therefore, it could not be assumed by the visionary leader that it could automatically be experienced within serving ministries.

Methodology

The researcher solicited the support of lay leadership to support the project work. Lay leadership includes servant leaders of various areas of the church to include ministers, musical directors, dance coordinators, food service ambassadors, deacons and those who support the fiduciary responsibilities of the church. The vision of the church is to develop disciples that add light to the world through witness and works. With that said, the church will only be able to successfully implement the vision, leadership should be connected to the ills of the community and those discovered in the congregation. Only then will we see some impact in empowering and equipping ordinary people to be authentic ambassadors of Christ in their everyday lives, which is the mission of the church.

In addition to the support of the contextual associations and ministry servant leaders, the researcher sought the wisdom and expertise of professional associates. One professional associate shared leadership tips that related to positive collaboration methods and leadership retreat ideas that would assist with relational equity and missional alignment. Another professional associate hosted a conference in Richmond, Virginia called Kingdom Covenant Church Planters Conference. The thrust was to support and encourage church planters and provide strategies for effectiveness. The researcher attended that conference on November 11, 2017 and gleaned relevant information to support the project thesis. One particular session directly related to the project. It was facilitated by a graduate and mentor of United Theological Seminary, Dr. Reginald Dawkins, and was entitled Creating Passionate Leaders. Although this conference was not a direct treatment within the researcher's project, it is noted because the researcher is

a church planter. Church planters share some intrinsic qualities and encounter similar problems when it comes to creating a culture and maintaining sustainable leadership.

Finally, the researcher invited another professional associate to preach at the church. Her sermon was based on the call story of Moses and was entitled “What’s in your Hand?” This supported the researcher emotionally and spiritually as a reminder that God has given each of us some things, gifts and people that can be used for kingdom purpose. Having each of the professional associates involved in the process throughout has been helpful as they each had unique ways that they added value. Again this was not a particular part of the project but added to how the researcher was specifically informed and encouraged during the doctoral process.

The researcher used the triangulation approach using qualitative methods with quantitative analysis. The three treatments for research were personal interviews of servant leadership, a Servant Summit workshop with pre-test and post-test of participants, and a Bible Study teaching with questions to be answered by participants. Contextual associates participated in all of the project treatments and helped to compile the results.

Personal interviews were used to gauge a benchmark perspective on how servant leaders understood the core values, mission, and vision of the church and how their particular ministry work could effectively carry out these characteristics. Each servant leader was asked the same questions and their responses were recorded. The pre-tests were done prior to a leadership event called The Light Community Church (TLCC) Servant Leader Summit. Prior to the leadership training, each participant was given a survey to complete. They completed the same survey after the leadership training was completed. For the last treatment, servant leaders were called together for another Servant

Leader Summit. The researcher taught the Old Testament foundational text and the New Testament Foundational Texts and each participant completed the questionnaire.

Each method of treatment was intentional. The leadership interview provided a framework for how servant leaders understood leadership in the context of church. The interviews were done with anyone who was considered a servant leader at the church regardless of the particular area of ministry. The range of leadership assignments went from licensed ministers, deacons, choir directors, ushers to people who served with church technology.

It provided opportunity for them to share their perceived strengths, determine if they knew their spiritual gifts, and provide safe space to share whether they thought the church was doing enough to train leaders. For this interview each leader was asked the same questions. Of particular importance was the part of the interview that dealt with some of the core values. Servant leaders were asked to rate the areas that they thought were important to leadership as compared to our core values. The range of church membership for people who participated in the leadership survey was from seven years to four months. This leadership interview was done prior to the first Servant Leader Summit.

Implementation

Treatment One - Personal Interviews

Each participant was asked to complete a leadership personal profile/assessment interview. The profile consisted of the person's name, the ministry that they represented

and the length of time that the participant had been a member of TLCC. The Leadership Team Interview Questions are noted in Appendix A.

The second treatment of the project was the completion of pre and post-tests. These were administered during the first TLCC Servant Leader Summit. The Servant Leader Summit was held for four hours and included time for fellowship, food, teaching, and also allowed input from all of the participants. With the goal of team leadership in mind, this meeting welcomed the thoughts, opinions and concerns of servant leaders. Folders were distributed to each participant which included the agenda, general contact information and news that they could use.

Relational equity was built by intentionally ensuring that lunch tables had various ministry members sitting together. In other words, there were no tables where only deacons sat, etc. This allowed people to talk to others who they may not have opportunity to talk to during Sunday service. To add to the experience, ordained ministers were asked to lead some general discussion at their tables.

A game of Scavenger Hunt was played during fellowship time. This required people at their tables to work as a team to try to get the most items on the list. Subjects included during the summit were intended to bring alignment in teaching and understanding. Powerpoint slides were used to teach, a video about leadership was shown, information was provided to help ministries advertise better, and at the end there was another opportunity for participants to decide together what leadership traits they wanted to be held accountable to in the coming months.

The video that was shown after lunch was called “God’s Chiseling Process.” This was a video that showed how each person has flaws, insecurities and weaknesses that can

hinder our ability to do the work of God. The only way that we can serve with the right type of heart is to allow God to chisel away at some of the areas in our hearts, minds, and spirits that do not represent God well. At the end of the video many people shared that it was a reminder that we are dealing with natural beings who are trying to do supernatural kingdom work and we must be willing to extend grace to each person. Each person is flawed regardless of the position they hold and the people that we lead have hurts that need to be healed as well. The goal of the video was to provide more common ground from an ecclesiastical perspective.

The intent of the pre and post-tests was to determine how much current servant leaders understood about the core values, mission and vision of the church. With servant leaders who had been members of the church from four months to six years, it was suspected that there would be various levels of understanding for general church questions. However, the outcome of the treatment would let the researcher know if there should be new considerations when bringing on new leadership at the church, such as length of time the person has been a member.

In the pre and post-tests general questions were asked about the church, key roles at the church, where things were located, etc. in order to get a sense of whether there was some basic level of understanding for the servant leaders. It also included how well they knew other servant leaders and ministry team functions. It will be difficult to have a team approach to leadership if someone did not know basic information about the church and how things were done.

An effective training program should ensure that servant leaders all share some standard information. Leadership alignment occurs when there is a melding together of

different people, with the same understanding of values. The pre-test would show where they were prior to the training and the post test results would identify if there was an increase in understanding after the summit was over. The agenda for the Servant Leader Summit is noted in Appendix B, along with pre-test, post-test questions in Appendix C.

The final treatment of the project was biblical teaching. This teaching was done within the confines of our second Servant Leader Summit. This was held for three hours on a Saturday morning. This summit had the same intent of the first summit: to provide fellowship, promote relational equity, and provide information that would further equip servant leaders to align their leadership for sustainable ministry. Lunch was not provided but there were breakfast snacks, bottled water, and a few breaks during the session.

The icebreaker activity was called “What Would Pastor Do.” A deacon of the church compiled some questions and scenarios to see if the servant leaders of the church could answer how the pastor would respond to this. These questions were multiple choice and some fun prizes were distributed for those who answered the most questions correct out of eight. The purpose of this icebreaker was to include the importance of knowing some things about the visionary and how they would respond to certain things. In understanding how the visionary leader would deal with scenarios relating to the church the servant leader could then compare how they would deal with that situation in their own ministry work to be in alignment. Some key things that came out of that icebreaker was that the pastor loves children, tries to deal with people patiently, and makes herself available to speaking intentionally with visitors of the church.

The significance of this activity was not shared at the onset of the icebreaker since it was a fun activity, but it was mentioned toward the end of the summit as an intentional

way to encourage alignment. No one will do things that same way because we are different but servant leaders should keep in mind that the vision is automatically demonstrated in ministry by the visionary and therefore, they should pay attention. It should be noted that the majority of participants got the icebreaker questions correct, which is a good sign of leadership alignment potential.

The researcher had already shared the doctoral project problem and the general process with various ministries of the church. However, the researcher went through the steps of the doctoral journey again with the whole contingent. The highlight of the summit was teaching the two scriptures, however there was another video shown that shared general leadership truths. It was important to the researcher that all learning styles were covered within our time together so several delivery methods were used to fulfill the agenda. Powerpoint slides were used to teach on leadership alignment, a video was shown with a leadership lesson and each person was given a paper agenda and had materials to write with if needed.

Biblical teaching was used as the final treatment with the intent that the teaching would provide each leader with some scriptural support for what leadership alignment is and why it is important to the church and community. Some key teaching points in the Old Testament text was the importance of the mantle, the importance of relational equity and the impact that was made to the community even without support from those in powerful or political positions. The emphasis in the New Testament teaching was the vision cast by Jesus that was carried out even when he was no longer present with them. They still had the comforting presence of the Holy Spirit to bind them together. For both texts participants answered the same eight questions using a range of one to five to

express the level of agreement. The agenda for the Servant Leader Summit is included in Appendix D, and the teaching notes for the Old and New Testament scriptures as well as the Bible study questionnaire are found below.

The researcher used parts of the biblical foundation chapter as the teaching notes and emphasized leadership alignment concepts from both texts. In addition to the biblical foundation and exegetical information, the researcher included how this information was relevant to them as the church. In the Old Testament, the researcher dealt with some of the challenges that Elijah dealt with as it related to loneliness, depression and wanting to give up even after the revelation that he was called by God to do great exploits as a prophet. This was likened to some of the challenges faced by church planters and other visionaries. Another key point shared in the Old Testament teaching was that we sometimes need to listen to God in unusual places because God speaks in different ways. This relevant lesson was taught using the example of Elijah being told by God to go to the mountain to get more information. A storm came and winds but God spoke in the stillness of the moments not in the loud noise. The participants were encouraged that it is important for each person to find time to get instruction from God in their quiet place.

Finally, it was emphasized that Elisha was found working which is a great leadership trait. He also understood the importance of the mantle and what it represented. Likewise, all servant leaders must understand the importance of serving God, regardless of what role or position they have. Relational equity was lifted as a key element for leadership alignment. Elisha coming from a rich family and Elijah coming from limited resources did not affect what God did through them. They served together to effect

change in the community even in the midst of political powers that did not support community members such as widows and the working class.

The researcher focused on leadership alignment while teaching the New Testament text. The disciple turned apostles took several positive steps toward leadership alignment before they were able to help the community. First, they made themselves whole by recruiting someone to replace Judas Iscariot. The pulling of lots was explained as an activity believed to be ordained by God, and thus Matthias was selected. This activity was introduced by the researcher as something to be considered when it is time to pull in new leadership for ministries. There should be some standard requirements and considerations. One consideration is what will it take to complete the ministry team and another is to determine the type of person that will help the team complete the work they have started. In the New Testament text, Peter required that the person who joined the eleven would be someone who had been with Jesus prior to his resurrection. Therefore, there was a desire for someone who had a relationship with Jesus and others. Relational equity was mentioned to the participants once again.

The other activity that occurred in the New Testament text was that they waited together in the upper room and followed Jesus' instructions to receive their help. The presenter researcher emphasized the fact that the same comforter that gave the apostles power is the same one that will give us power. This helper is the Holy Spirit. The activity of them waiting together on the one thing that would help them is intrinsically important when it comes to leadership alignment. It requires each person to rely on a power source that is stronger than just intellect and natural skill.

Once those activities of the text were introduced, the key thrust of the text was explained as an action of leadership alignment. The apostles were so connected to the mission, vision and values of Jesus that they were able to make impact although Jesus was not physically with them. They sold what they had to make provisions for people in the community and when the community was helped by the church, the church grew by the thousands. The church also received favor from the community.

The text was taught with the historical context explained. It was also explained that some things that were done in the time of the text would not work well now. For the story of Elijah and Elisha, it is no longer expected that a person would leave their homes, family or their “day job” as it were to do the will and purpose of God. The urgency and understanding that serving God pays eternal dividends that a secular job cannot pay will help us put things in the proper perspective. Being a servant leader for church should not be taken lightly or as something extra that is done. It should be understood as a mantle that was providentially placed on a person by God. For the New Testament text, it was explained that it is no longer expected that people would give up their worldly possessions to care for others but it is expected that our spiritual gifts, resources, and collaboration of shared wisdom be used for the good of the kingdom

A questionnaire was given to each participant after the text was taught. The questions were developed to determine the prior understanding of the text before it was taught and how effective the teaching was to change understanding, behavior, and future impact to the ministry. The Old Testament teaching evaluation included eight questions and the New Testament teaching evaluation included nine questions. The questions and

answers are documented more fully in the Summary of Learning section so they are not included here.

To ascertain the level of understanding the researcher used the social research method of a Likert scale for participant answers. The following instructions were included on each of the questionnaires: On a scale of one to five, rate the following statements as they apply to your context of ministry. These questions pertain to your understanding of the biblical text in relationship to the command of God to aligning church leadership to support church mission and vision for sustainable ministry. To

1=highly disagree 2=disagree 3=neutral 4=agree 5=highly agree

After completing the two questionnaires, each participant was provided with a written copy of the biblical foundations summary for them to consult and review in their own time. This was an additional assurance that the scriptures were understood after the summit was completed. This summary was pulled from the biblical foundations chapter and is not included in this chapter for that reason.

Summary of Learning – Results of Implementation

Treatment One - Leadership Interviews

Twenty-five servant leaders were interviewed. One person was not a member of the church and served on staff as the Director of Music. The membership level of all persons interviewed ranged from four months to seven years. The church is seven years old at the time of testing. Of the twenty-four members, the membership breakdown was as follows:

- Twelve participants – Between five and seven years

- Seven participants- Between two and four years members
- Five participants- Under two years members

Leaders were asked how many times they attended Sunday worship service. Twenty-two of twenty-five people (88%) indicated that they come to church three or four Sundays of each month. The person who is newest to the church only attended once a month but indicated that she would make a commitment to come every Sunday. For those who came to church three to four Sundays a month they indicate that they only miss if they are out of town.

To determine if the people serving in ministry understood their leadership chain of command, they were asked to tell who they received their ministry direction from. The hope was that it would identify if the servant leader had understanding as well as if the team leader was doing a good job at providing leadership support for proper alignment. Three of the twenty-five people (12%) were not clear on who their direct ambassador or leader was for their ministry. Two people rated the level of support they received from their team ambassadors as low quality (one was low and five was high). These two people reported that their level of leadership support was a level three which is below what is considered good.

Regarding the understanding of the mission and vision of the church, eleven people of the twenty-five (44%) were able to speak to the mission of the church using actual terms from the mission and vision statement. The remaining participants gave general terms of the mission of the church but did not link it directly with the particular ministry of The Light Community Church. Three could not appropriately answer the question about how their ministry fit into the overall mission of the church.

Every person interviewed was clear on what they did to serve the church and were able to articulate the importance of it for the sake of helping people. However, the majority did not specifically connect it to the mission or vision of the church. When given the four goals of our mission - relational, relentless, responsible, and relevant, at least eighteen people were able to connect how their ministry carries out these characteristics.

Some of the interview questions were designed to determine if the leaders felt prepared to do their ministry assignment and if they thought they were effective at carrying out that assignment. One person did not feel that they were properly prepared to serve in their current leadership role, rating herself as a two of five, which was the highest. All other participants rated themselves between three and five in leadership levels. Twenty of the twenty-five people rated their preparation level as either a four or five, which the researcher believes is a high level of confidence.

One person did not feel effective as a leader at TLCC. It is important to note that this is the same person who did not feel equipped or prepared as a leader. The rating was a two for this person. Everyone else felt that they were between the three and five range, with five being the highest. Everyone was able to share why they rated themselves the way they did and some of the comments that stuck out to the researcher are noted below:

- Low rating because I have not been trained until today
- Need to make sure I understand the proper protocols to fit my skills/gifts into this ministry
- I'm a good leader but still relatively new to the church
- Still learning

There were also some very introspective answers to the level of effectiveness. The researcher records a few of those below:

- Needing to work on follow through, time management, and developing a team
- Spreading myself too thin yields ineffectiveness - This was shared by two of those interviewed
- I need to communicate better, be more proactive, and ask for help

Top answers for how to be a better leader, what is needed to be a better leader: More training, learning to delegate, and learning to communicate more effectively. Most of the participants were aware that there were leadership classes available and required, although there were various answers to which classes they were. Some could not name them without looking at the written booklet. The researcher deems this as normal levels of understanding since the leadership class schedule and topics had just recently been distributed.

Eighteen of twenty-five (72%) believed that there was enough investment in leadership at the church. Four people (16%) believed that there was not enough investment made in leadership. It was noted by one person who had been a member for the least amount of time that they were not aware of what kind of investment was made in leadership. One person said that there was an investment in leadership but it was not ministry specific. Three others indicated that the training that was done at the Servant Leader Summit was the type of investment that was needed.

When asked how often individual ministries met as a team, the answers varied. All but one person met at some frequency with their teams. There was no indication about what was discussed or learned at the ministry meetings because all of the leaders

did different things. For example, the dance ministry leader meets weekly with the dancers for practice but at various times with the other dance coordinators.

Twenty of twenty-five people (80%) were aware of their spiritual gifts. This is significant and represents a good response since the church teaches spiritual gift discovery and has a ministry designated to help church members connect their gifts and passions with available serving opportunities. It could not be determined by the interview results whether or not the participants believed that they were serving in a ministry that fully utilized their top gifts and passions.

Most people interviewed believe that their ministries are open and welcoming to anyone who wanted to join. For those that did not, they were accurate based on the type of ministry. The church has an Executive Advisory Council, for example. The people on this ministry have to be recommended to serve and be vetted in order to serve on the ministry because they represent the top decision makers for operational decisions for the church. Likewise, the Diaconate Ministry requires a one-year training process and test before ordination. For these ministries, the researcher believes it is appropriate that they not be identified as open to all. Most of the ministries at the church do not have a training program for people to go through once they join the ministry. Some of the ministries represented in the interviews were new ministries who indicated that they were still working on a training program.

Leaders were given the opportunity to share which leadership traits they thought were most important at the church. The most popular answers were:

- Ability to think for yourself without being told every step - eighteen
- Good communication skills – twenty-three

- Friendly – twenty-one
- Having the heart of a servant – twenty-three
- Understanding the big picture of ministry while serving - eighteen
- Ability to build others up - twenty

Leaders were also asked to name three traits that they thought was needed overall in order to have a stronger leadership team. The top results were better communication, more hospitality, training others, and being friendly. Being friendly is noted specifically by the researcher because it was shared specifically as being different than hospitality. There was a sense that leaders were not always being friendly to other leaders. Hospitality was indicated as the way that people are welcomed into the ministry. Other words used to describe this theme of hospitality was to avoid cliques and being open and flexible.

Since the concept of leadership alignment had not been taught prior to the time of the leadership interviews, the participants were asked what the term meant to them. Twenty-four of twenty-five people (96%) were able to articulate a definition of leadership alignment that was similar to the researchers understanding of leadership alignment.

Treatment Two - Pre and Post Test Results

This test did not yield the result strength that was originally anticipated. The reasons for this vary. There were twenty-four people who took the pre-test but only fifteen people turned in the post test after training. The results of the pre and post-test were problematic because of so many opened ended questions. The answers given by

individuals for the pre-test and the post-test were varied because there were no multiple-choice options provided. The original concept was that people would improve answers for the post test for any answer in the pre-test that was incorrect. However, the researcher found that the results showed a partial answer for the pre-test and a different answer for the post test in most cases.

Another problem with the test results is that because there were fewer people to return the post test, it was difficult to see if all participants received more insight after the servant leader training. The results indicated that most of the leaders at the church know pieces of processes but are not fully aware of the full process. Having so many people participant in the pre and post-test also proved to be a challenge.

In summary, church leaders were generally aware of how to handle situations and get things done at the church but they all indicated various ways to accomplish the task. They were aware of who our deacons were and who was responsible for carrying on back office operations for support of the ministry. But some of the terms that are clear to the pastor such as ordained ambassadors as well as some of the ways to keep communication flowing between members and leaders of the church are not clearly understood by the leaders. This was evident in the pre and post-test.

There was confusion about how long the church has been in existence and the names of the social media connections that the church has. Most people got the answer partially correct and this is something that is reviewed when every member goes through new membership classes. This is mentioned because of the concern about communication and connection. In our culture, social media has to be included when considering connection and communication. Depending on how long ago it was that the person went

through the new members classes, they may have forgotten this information. However, social media connections are also posted on our bulletins and were discussed at the servant training.

This shows that our leaders may not be as plugged in as expected in order to be relevant and responsible with their ministry. While in retrospect some of the pre and post test questions should have been different, the variation of answers shows that there has been a challenge in ensuring that leaders are clear. It should also be noted that most of the answers to the questions are written down and available for leaders. Either the leaders have not read the information or have not internalized it in order to be able to share it. The researcher does not believe that every leader should know every single aspect of church operations so internalization of all protocol is not an issue. However, it is an issue if those who lead and participate in ministry do not know where or how to access the information that they need.

Treatment Three - Bible Study Evaluation Results

Twenty-four participants were in attendance for the last treatment. The Old Testament text and New Testament text were taught and the evaluations for both texts were the same format. The Old Testament teaching evaluation had eight questions and the New Testament teaching evaluation had nine questions. Participants were instructed to answer all questions were using one for highly disagree through five for highly agree.

Old Testament Test Evaluation Results from 1 Kings 19: 19-21

1. I did not fully understand the meaning of the text before the lesson

Answers: Twelve people gave this answer a four, which means that they agreed that they did not understand the meaning of the text before the lesson was taught. Four people gave this answer a five, which means that they highly agreed that they did not understand the meaning of the text before it was taught. This is the majority of the participants (sixteen of twenty-four or 66%) that understood this text for the first time.

2. The lesson changed my understanding of the text.

Answers: Fifteen people in attendance gave the answer of five, which indicates that they highly agreed that the lesson changed the understanding of the text. Eight people gave the rating of four, which also indicates agreement. This is the majority (twenty of twenty-four or 83%) of participants.

3. The lesson changed my understanding of godly leadership.

Answers: Thirteen participants rated this as a four in agreement that it changed their understanding of godly leadership. Eight participants rated it as a five and highly agreed that their understanding of godly leadership was changed. This is the majority of participants (twenty-one of twenty-four or 87.5%).

4. The lesson caused me to reflect on how I lead in God's church.

Answers: Twenty-three people (95.8%) gave a score of agreed or highly agreed to this question. This indicates that the leadership lessons of Elijah and Elisha caused them to rethink their leadership within the church.

5. I was convicted by the lesson that was taught

Answers: Seventeen people (71%) indicated a conviction from the teaching of the text as evidenced by either a four or a five rating.

6. More members of the church need to have this lesson.

Answers: It was a unanimous response that more members of the church needed to have this lesson. This was evidenced by either a rating of four (six people) or five (eighteen people).

7. The lesson needs to be taught again for better clarity

Answers: Nineteen participants (79%) gave ratings from highly disagree to neutral that this lesson needed to be taught again which indicates that the content was clear and did not need further clarification.

8. After receiving the lesson, I am willing to fully participate in supporting the church's mission and vision for sustainable ministry.

Answers: All twenty-four participants agreed that they are willing to fully participate in leadership going forward. This is evidenced by a rating of either a four (five participants) or five (nineteen participants). Four indicates agreement and five indicates high agreement.

New Testament Evaluation Results from Acts 2: 42-47

1. I did not fully understand the meaning of the text before the lesson

Answers: Twelve people (50%) did not fully understand the meaning of the text before the lesson as indicated by at four or five rating. Nine people (37.5%) had some understanding of this New Testament text as evidenced by the rating of one or two. Three people rated this question as neutral, which was number three.

2. The lesson changed my understanding of the text.

Answers: Ten of twenty-four people (42%) received a different understanding of the text.

3. The lesson changed my understanding of godly leadership.

Answers: Thirteen participants (54%) indicated that their understanding of godly leadership changed as a result of the teaching.

4. The lesson empowered me to pursue greater action as a leader.

Answers: Twenty-three participants (96%) indicated an impulse to pursue greater action.

5. The lesson made me aware of how to sustain a ministry through collaborative leadership.

Answers: Twenty-one of twenty-four (87.5%) agreed or highly agreed with this statement by giving the rating of a four or five.

6. The lesson created a need to empower leaders to share all things in common for the good of the mission of the church.

Answers: Twenty-three people (96%) felt the need to empower leaders to share for the common good.

7. More members of the church need to have this lesson.

Answers: None of the participants thought the lesson needed to be taught again to the congregation.

8. The lesson needs to be taught again for better clarity.

Answers: Eleven people thought that this lesson needed to be taught again for better clarity, six people were neutral and seven people thought that the lesson did not need to be taught again. This indicates that there were different levels of clarity on this particular text and or a predetermined familiarity with the text that caused various levels of priority for it to be taught again.

9. After the lesson, I am willing to fully participate in supporting the church's mission and vision for sustainable ministry.

Answers: Eighteen of twenty-four participants gave a rating of five to demonstrate high agreement of being on board. The remaining six participants answered this statement with a four to indicate that they agreed to be on board for sustainable ministry. This results in 100% of participants are willing to walking toward missional ministry together.

Conclusion

The researcher started this project with the desire to see if leadership alignment was possible among the various types of leaders at The Light Community Church. The other goal was to see if leadership alignment existed among the leaders of the church. This was important to the researcher because team work and making an impact has been a concern to her since childhood. The ability to make a difference, constantly improve and to have a shared responsibility in helping others seems ideal. The project was very eye opening and revealed that the concept is easier said than implemented. Leadership alignment is possible but it will take more time in the current context.

Project implementation showed that there is a general consensus on what the church mission is but there was a plethora of ideas about how that is being carried out and what each ministry should do to align with the vision. Current leaders are committed to the church but there are various levels of commitment to their particular ministry. After reviewing the project results the researcher is concerned that the mission, vision, and core values of the church might be too much for people to align with. Although it is read on the first Sundays, and reviewed during new members class, many of our leaders do not remember it enough to know if their ministry is aligned with it. Test results indicate that this is confusing for leaders to really grasp which is most important.

The idea of leadership alignment can only be implemented with the understanding that there must still be leader who is intentional about putting the vision in a practical package that can be easily understood. Elijah walked it out before Elisha, but Elisha had taken the mantle seriously from the time it was given to him. Jesus had walked the vision out before the disciples, but all of them took the mission seriously enough to leave what they were doing and follow Jesus. They still had enough zeal and wisdom to pursue mission even after Jesus had ascended because they had the help and hope of the Holy Spirit which was given to them for empowerment by their leader.

As the pastor of a seven-year old church, the researcher understands that in addition to walking it out in front of people, there must be an intentional push to package the vision in a way that it can be easily pursued. With the competing priorities of people who are in church it cannot be assumed that things are understood. This project was eye opening of the challenges that are present. These challenges could prevent sustainability if they are not properly and prayerfully handled.

The pastor of a newer church start is the chief visionary and the project implementation proved that this person will be the only person that is as passionate and persistent about pursuing the vision of the church. The most successful test was the Bible study teaching which resonated with all participants and helped them to understand the importance of leadership alignment. Another encouraging piece of information was that all participants understood what leadership alignment was before it was taught.

Now the goal is to build on the results that have been determined. The researcher is excited about some of the things that are already in place to address the results. The researcher is also excited to share the final results of the project implementation to the

leadership team. This will let them know that they have been heard and that their thoughts, concerns, and strengths have been taken into account. They want to be aligned and they want to serve and make impact but it will take time and intentional work to get everyone on a better path. It is understood that leadership alignment is a concept that will be ever evolving and never perfect. People and participation changes in churches all the time so that should be kept in mind by pastor and people.

Monthly leadership meetings will resume to bring people together on a regular basis. Topics for the leadership meetings will address their needs and the things that will help support their work in ministry and the marketplace. Concerns noted in this test work such as need for communication, friendlier teammates, how to delegate, etc. will be addressed and taught in the upcoming leadership meetings and from the pulpit. A new church theme for the year is about love, and that theme will be emphasized in preaching, teaching, and within leadership huddles. It is clearly understood that the implementation of the teaching is only as good as the person who follows through. In other words, the teaching can be done but the ministry leaders are the people who need to carry it out.

There is also a ministry at the church that is recommitted to helping people connect their gifts and passions to serving opportunities. One of the goals of this ministry is to help create onboarding and exiting plans for people who want to connect to ministry opportunity or outreach team. If this ministry operates successfully then it will help address the concern that some of our newer leaders addressed about not knowing how to gain momentum in a new ministry.

The researcher discloses that monthly leadership meetings were done at one point but when attendance was low for several months, the meetings were stopped. The testing

that was done for project implementation treatments one and two showed that there were too many open-ended questions and too many questions. There were also too many participants. If this was done again, there would be fewer participants in the interviews, and pre and post-tests. As participants potentially grew weary of answering the questions, the answers became more-vague. The results showed that bits and pieces of general processes were understood but that there was a commitment to the church.

Having longer meetings with a variety of topics introduced was not helpful in bringing about leadership alignment. Future servant meetings should be laser focused around a particular theme in order to have more successful alignment. It was evident that some of the participants did not read the handouts that were given to them prior to the post tests, because pre-test answers and post-test answers remained the same.

The researcher will continue to work intentionally with the leadership team to creating an environment where leadership alignment can occur. The mission, vision and core values of the church will also need to be revisited. People cannot follow a mission that is too wordy or hard to understand. The church currently has a motto, a tagline, a mission, a vision, and a closing confirmation that we end the service with every Sunday. All of these statements sound good but are probably not all necessary, especially for the goal of leadership alignment and sustainable ministry impact.

This project has been a blessing and the results will allow us to make the proper changes to ensure leadership alignment that will lead to sustainable ministry. A leadership retreat will be held later in the year and a subsequent leadership alignment plan will be developed for future success.

APPENDIX A

LEADERSHIP TEAM INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

What ministry are you the servant leader for? (Name one)

Who do you receive ministry instruction from? (This might be your ambassador, team leader, or some person at the church who provides you with your assignments and regular coaching)

1. What is the quality of support and coaching that you receive from your ministry leader/ambassador (1 is no support/no information, 5 is excellent coaching and communication) 1 2 3 4 5

2. Explain the mission of the church (use the mission statement or key words from the mission if you know it. Otherwise use your own words)

3. Explain how your ministry fits into the overall ministry of the church?

4. What is your comfort level that you are prepared to serve in leadership with your current role? (1 to 5/5 being the highest) 1 2 3 4 5

5. How would you rank yourself as an effective leader of TLCC? (1 to 5/5 is the highest)
Why did you give yourself that ranking?

6. What would it take for you to be a better leader at TLCC?

7. Do you know which classes are required for you to take as a leader at TLCC? Y N

8. Do you think there is enough investment made in TLCC leadership? Y N

9. How often do you meet with the team that you lead?

10. How often do you attend service (_____ of 4 Sundays)?

11. What are your top three spiritual gifts?

12. Our vision is to be a passionate community of faith that is relevant in our presentation of the gospel, relentless in pursuit of God's plan, responsible and relational in our witness to the world.

What does your ministry do to carry out these four vision goals?

Relevant -

Relentless -

Responsible -

Relational -

13. The theme for our church this year is TEAM Light: Winning at Life together, using God's playbook. If someone new was to come into your ministry would they see your ministry as a team that they could join, or a team that they had to try out for before being accepted? Answer and explain.

14. Does your ministry have a training plan and schedule for new team members? Why or why not?

15. Here are some traits of leadership, please rank them from 1 to 5 (5 being the highest) by how important you think they are for TLCC leaders.

- Ability to think on their own without being told what to do _____
- Good communicator _____
- Flexible _____
- Entrepreneur Spirit _____
- Tither/Faithful Financial Support _____
- Friendly _____
- Able to motivate others _____
- Competent in what they are doing _____
- Patient _____
- Able to understand the bigger picture _____
- Servant's Heart _____
- Integrated into the Life of the Church (beyond just their ministry)

- Attend Bible Study _____
- Program Planner _____
- Understand how their ministry affects the larger body _____
- Effectively build teams _____

16. If you could name three things that our leadership at TLCC does well (overall), what would you say?

17. If you could name three things that our leaders at TLCC needs to work on (Overall), what would you say?

18. What does the term "leadership alignment" mean to you?

APPENDIX B

AGENDA FOR SERVANT LEADER SUMMIT: PART ONE

WELCOME TO TLCC's FIRST SERVANT LEADER SUMMIT!

Theme for 2017: Winning at life together using God's Playbook

Purpose of our time together:

- To kick off our year together as Servant Leaders of TLCC's Winning Team.
- To reconnect, fellowship and think together to improve ministry effectiveness and efficiency.
- To complete two required Leadership Classes of TLCC RESET Strategy

Agenda:

10:00 to 10:05	Opening Prayer and Purpose Review
10:05 to 10:15	Introductions and Review of the Day
10:15 to 10:30	Pre-Test - General Information about TLCC Leadership
10:30 to 11: 30	Navigation Tips for TLCC Servant Leaders- (Who's Who/What's What/ How To/Where it Is)
11: 30 to 11:45	Event Checklist- Support for Servant Leaders- Tishawna Pritchett
11:45 to 12: 00	Video (God's Chiseling Process) and Discussion
12:00 to 12: 40	Lunch/Table Talk (Lunch Catered by Bite Size Catering, Claudia Coleman Owner)
12: 45 to 1:15	Marketing Matters at TLCC- Group Work
1: 15 to 2:15	Leadership Traits for TLCC Servant Leaders
2:15 to 2:30	Post Test- General Information about TLCC Leadership
	Closing Prayer and Dismissal

APPENDIX C
PRE-TEST/POST-TEST QUESTIONS
GENERAL KNOWLEDGE OF CHURCH

Pre-Test/Post-Test Questions: General Knowledge of Church

Do You Know?

1. What is a Servant Leader?
2. Are there more leaders at this church than ministers?
3. How many Deacons do we have at TLCC?
4. Name one deacon.
5. How many Ordained Ambassadors do we have at this church?
6. Name one Ordained Ambassador.
7. Who is the Worship Ambassador?
8. Does your ministry have a mailbox?
9. Who does our church bulletins?
10. How do you reserve space for a ministry meeting?
11. What do you do if you need church funds for your ministry?
12. Name one choir director at TLCC.
13. What do you do if your ministry wants to do an event?
14. How would you help a new visitor who wants more information about the church?
15. What is the church's motto?
16. What is the church's closing confirmation?
17. Name one new ministry of the church.
18. What does our church theme mean to you?
19. How many years has this church been in existence?
20. What is the name of our church Facebook Page?

APPENDIX D

AGENDA FOR SERVANT LEADER SUMMIT: PART TWO

Servant Leader Summit: Part Two
December 2, 2017
10 am to 12:30 pm

WELCOME!

Please sign the attendance sheet

Opening Prayer- Minister Monica Bagby

- I. Introductions- All
- II. Icebreaker- What would Pastor Do?- Deacon J. Huggins
- III. Review of the Last Servant Leader Summit- Pastor Ridley
- IV. Servant Leader Updates for 2018/News You can Use- Pastor Ridley
- V. Servant Circle Input and Development- Deacon T. Thompson (Scribe)
- VI. Overview of Doctoral Work- Pastor Ridley
- VII. Old Testament Teaching/Individual Debrief- Pastor Ridley
- VIII. Video—Blind with Vision (Leadership Lessons)- Sight and Sound Ministry
- IX. New Testament Teaching/Individual Debrief- Pastor Ridley
- X. Reflection Sharing- All
- XI. Closing Prayer-Naya Pratt

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